

Bahamas Super Dive Travel Guide

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A Diver's Look At Ft. Lauderdale And Palm Beach

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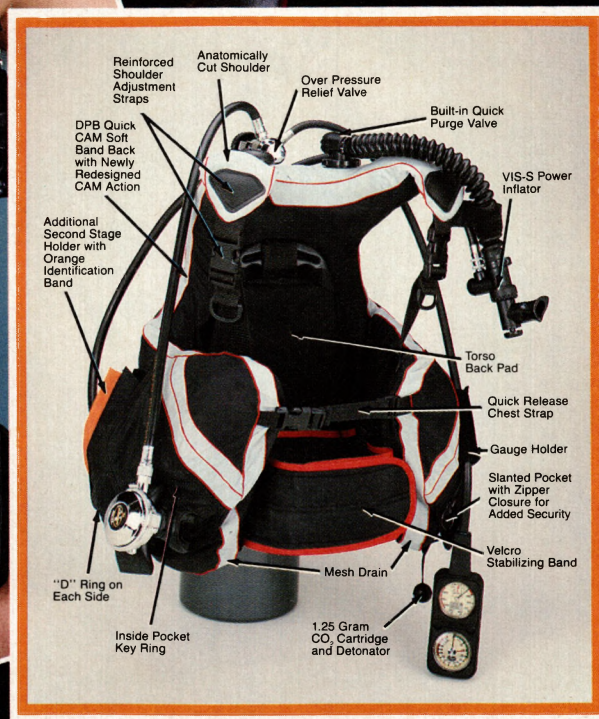
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Diver's Calendar

PSC AUCTION

The Princeton Scuba Club will hold its annual auction and equipment swap meet **May 3** at the Princeton Junction Firehouse, Princeton, New Jersey. Refreshments will be available. For information contact the Princeton Scuba Club, P.O. Box 160, Princeton Junction, NJ 08550. 🌿

SEA '86

Jean-Michel Cousteau will be the master of ceremonies at the 22nd annual Sea '86 underwater film festival **May 10** at the Paramount Theatre of Arts in Oakland, California. Sponsored by the Northern California Chapter of the Underwater Photographic Society (UPS), the event will feature presentations by Jack McKenney, Chris Newbert and others.

For information call Roger Hess (415) 276-5895 or Laurie Oliver (415) 728-5955. 🌿

DIVER'S DAY

The sixth annual Diver's Day, sponsored by the Convair Recreation Association, featuring lectures, films, symposiums, gear displays and sales, will be held **May 10** at the General Dynamics Recreation Auditorium in San Diego, California. For information call Bill Prichard at (619) 547-3690. 🌿

EQUIPMENT EXPOSITION

New England Divers of San Francisco, California will present its Third Annual Equipment Exposition and Giant Pre-Season Sale **May 16-17**. Major equipment manufacturers will be on hand to demonstrate their products. For information contact New England Divers, Inc., 398 5th Street, San Francisco, CA 94107; (415) 434-3614. 🌿

OUR WORLD-UNDERWATER

Our World-Underwater XVI will occur in Chicago, IL **May 16-18**. The convention, including seminars, a diver rescue workshop, an archaeological research diver course (presented by the Atlantic Alliance for Maritime Heritage Conservation) and more, will be held at the Hyatt Regency Chicago. Two hundred exhibit booths will cover new equipment, certification programs, travel, underwater photography and diving techniques. A cocktail party will be held Friday night, with live entertainment. The Saturday evening film festival, with MC Bill Gleason, will be held at Medinah Temple, 600 N. Wabash.

For information and tickets contact Our World-Underwater, P.O. Box 4428, Chicago, IL 60680; (312) 664-4971. 🌿

U/W INVESTIGATIONS SEMINAR

The Regional Underwater Search and Recovery Unit of the Hamilton County Ohio Police Association will present its Sixth Annual Underwater Investigations Seminar **May 16-18** at the Radisson Inn, Cincinnati, Ohio. For information contact Officers Tom Wagner or All Gille, Deer Park Ohio Police Department, Matson and Beech Avenue, Cincinnati, OH 45236; (513) 791-8056. 🌿

MCKENNEY IN SYRACUSE

Jack McKenney will present his underwater films **May 17** in the Civic Center Auditorium, Syracuse, New York. The program is sponsored by the National Aquatic Service. For information contact the NAS, 1732 Erie Boulevard East, Syracuse, NY 13210; (315) 479-5544. 🌿

FIESTA DEL SOL

The fourth annual Fiesta del Sol will be held **May 17-26** in Ventura Harbor, Ventura, California. The celebration includes a chili cookoff, volleyball contest, crew boat open house, 10 kilometer run, ocean art show, children's fishing derby, sand sculpturing contest, Fiesta Sun King and Queen contest and and Aquaman/Aquawoman competition.

For more information contact the Fiesta office; (805) 658-2833. 🌿

SECONN SWAP MEET

The SECONN Dive Club will host a scuba gear swap meet and raffle **May 18** in the parking lot of the Polish American Club, Maple Ave., Monteville, CT. For information call Bill at (203) 447-2564. 🌿

TREASURE DIVE

The fourth annual Memorial Day Treasure Dive, sponsored by Smith Diving of Minneapolis, MN, will be held at Square Lake, Washington County, MN **May 26**. For information contact Bob Bailey, Smith Diving, 2835 Central Avenue NE, Minneapolis, MN 55418; (612) 789-2575. 🌿

SEAVUE '86

SeaVue '86, sponsored by the Virginia Institute of Marine Science, will be held **May 31-June 1** at the Ocean Island Motel on the beach at Lynnhaven Inlet, Virginia Beach, VA. The program will offer in-water training exercises and competitions such as underwater navigation, rescue and treasure hunting. Also included will be seminars, manufacturer exhibits and a film festival.

For information contact SeaVue '86, Virginia Institute of Marine Science, Gloucester Point, Virginia 23062. 🌿

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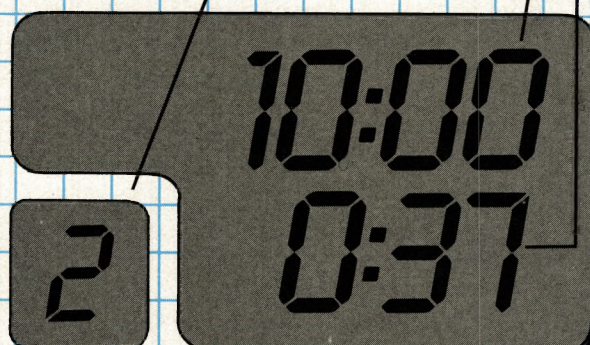
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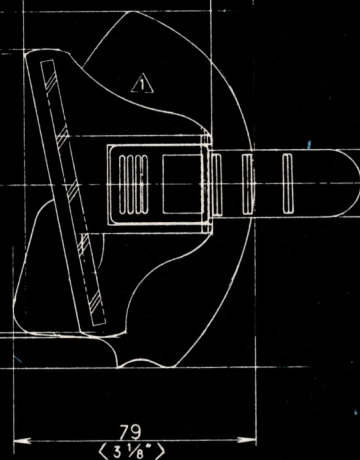
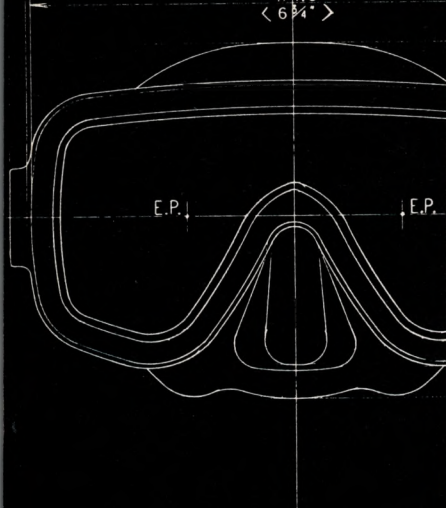
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COVER

A diver explores the propeller of the Balboa wreck off George Town, Grand Cayman Island. For more on Cayman, see page 98 and 122. And, don't miss the Bahamas super dive guide on page 65. Photo/Geri Murphy.



Don Foster's dive boat



Andros sunset



Ocean Divers



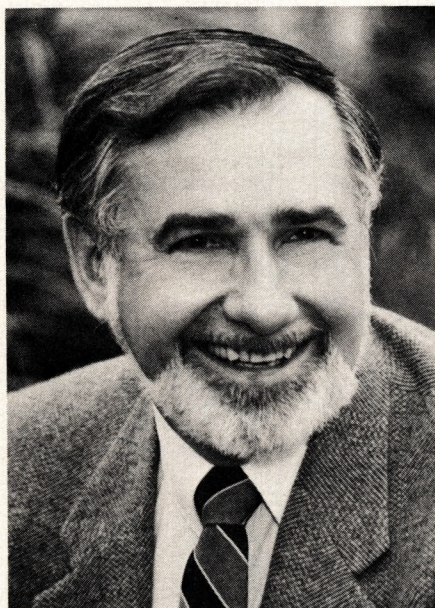
Relaxing on a Bahamas beach



Bolongo Bay

SDM Editorial

BY THE PUBLISHER



GETTING BACK INTO DIVING

A new arrival at a tropical island resort joins the dive boat for a morning trip to the drop-off. The divemaster scrutinizes his guests on the way out and silently thinks to himself, "This guy should be no problem." The diver is approximately 40 years old, from California, has been diving eight years and holds a certification card from a well-known training agency. He seems to know what he's talking about and talks about diving in such exotic spots as the Coral Sea and the Philippines. He appears in good physical condition and mentions running and racquetball.

Once the boat is anchored, the diver takes his time getting his well worn equipment together. As he gets into his gear he appears a little nervous. He is the last one off the boat, except for the two advanced students who have been working out their repet dive profile with their instructor. Finally, he makes his entry and starts down the anchor line with a slight current tugging at his body. His appointed dive buddy is 15 feet ahead on the same line.

At precisely 28 feet things begin to go wrong. The diver has difficulty clearing his ears. Frustrated by his inability to equalize, he clumsily attempts to turn around on the anchor line. His snorkel catches on the line and pulls his mask off his face. It fills with water. Caught off balance by the current, the diver attempts to tilt his head backward and clear his mask. The angle is wrong and a shot of seawater goes up his nose and into his sinus. With knee jerk reflex, the diver lets

go of the anchor line and starts thrashing his way to the surface. He breaks through the surface, spits out his mouthpiece and rips the flooded mask off his face. By now the current has carried him past the stern of the dive boat. His coughing and gagging attracts the attention of the instructor who jumps into the water and drags the diver back to the ladder.

How is it possible that a well trained, certified diver with years of experience could have such a problem with basic scuba skills? Still gasping from the near miss, the diver solves the riddle by blurting out, "I blew it. I guess I'm a little out of practice. I haven't been in the water in the last 18 months."

Reentry into the sport, after a long period of inactivity, is perhaps one of diving's most difficult maneuvers. No matter how extensive or rigorous the original scuba training, the human body tends to forget with time. Skills and timing fade and self-confidence ebbs like the tide. Yet most divers don't seem to realize they are rusty. The process is subtle. It is only when the diver is fully suited up and balanced on the edge of the dive boat that he realizes he is not as well prepared as he should be.

Reentry is a serious safety problem at dive resorts and on local dive boats as well. In fact, it may very well be one of the major contributing factors to this sport's present credibility gap in the C-card system. Graduates of 12 to 20 week scuba courses are turning up at dive resorts acting like complete neophytes. Their C-cards do not reflect a true picture of their dive status. As one divemaster put it, "I really don't care about the date of the customer's first dive—I want to know the date of his/her last dive."

How can the dive industry cope with this growing problem? The first step is to recognize it for what it is and to realize the situation has the potential of growing worse. The good news is that scuba reentry is a solvable problem. Once it is fully recognized by the diving public and understood by the resorts and divemasters, measures can be taken to relearn old skills. Here are just a few examples of

what is being done today:

1) Three years ago PADI introduced a refresher course called *Scuba Review*. It consists of a special self-study textbook, instructor review of basic scuba skills and an optional open water dive for environmental orientation. The program was greeted with such enthusiasm that the first 10,000 copies of the workbook sold out in the first two months.

2) An organization specializing in travel and medical education has come up with a unique way of coping with the scuba reentry problem. Each traveler is sent a packet of pre-trip information containing a set of dive tables and a mini-exam with five repetitive dive problems. Customers practice their repetitive dive calculations *before* they reach the resort. They become proficient in figuring repet group letters and maximum bottom time. A lecture on personal diving safety is given the morning of the first day at the dive resort, prior to any open water activity.

3) One large Caribbean dive operation starts every new week with a walkaround orientation and warm up dive. At 9:30 every Sunday morning, new arrivals are conducted on a walk-through orientation of the dive shop procedures, tank location, dive boat rules and basic equipment requirements. At 10:30 am guests make a warm up dive from the pier directly in front of the hotel. The gradually sloping bottom and calm surface provide an ideal environment for gentle reentry into diving. Instructors stand ready on the pier for assistance with gear and rescues if needed.

4) Many dive stores throughout the U.S. are now promoting local dives as a method of staying in shape between trips to the ocean. Events such as underwater Easter egg hunts, Thanksgiving turkey dives, Halloween U/W pumpkin carving contests and treasure hunts help to turn ordinary dives into social events.

If techniques such as those listed above are conducted on a national basis by all dive stores, instructors and dive resorts, this sport can successfully combat the reentry problem. More diving on a regular basis is the key to a safer sport. 

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Scuba Quiz

Category: CO₂ Inflators

By Dennis Graver

The value of CO₂ cartridges for emergency flotation has been a controversial issue for years. There are several aspects of these mechanisms that are seldom taught but with which all divers should be familiar. Here's your chance to show your knowledge or to learn more about CO₂ inflators. Answer all the questions before referring to the answers, which are on the next page.

1. Carbon dioxide (CO₂) is more compressible than other gases.

- ☐ A. True
☐ B. False

2. In strong concentrations, CO₂ is corrosive to the lungs.

- ☐ A. True
☐ B. False

3. One gram of CO₂ provides approximately one pound of buoyancy at sea level.

- ☐ A. True
☐ B. False

4. The relative position of a CO₂ detonator on a diver is usually the same underwater as it is out of the water.

- ☐ A. True
☐ B. False

5. The temperature of the cartridge itself drops below freezing when a

CO₂ cartridge is activated.

- ☐ A. True
☐ B. False

6. External corrosion of a CO₂ cartridge can cause the cartridge to explode.

- ☐ A. True
☐ B. False

7. The cost of CO₂ cartridges makes divers reluctant to replace expended ones.

- ☐ A. True
☐ B. False

8. Neglecting to replace an expended CO₂ cartridge can lead to damage of the bladder in a buoyancy compensator.

- ☐ A. True
☐ B. False

9. The optimum location for a CO₂ mechanism is near the bottom of a buoyancy compensator.

- ☐ A. True
☐ B. False

10. The pressure of the gas inside a new CO₂ mechanism is:

- ☐ A. Less than 1,000 psi
☐ B. Between 1,000 and 2,000 psi
☐ C. More than 2,000 psi

11. The pressure of a CO₂ cartridge is sufficient to overcome any blockage in the air passage leading

into a BC.

- ☐ A. True
☐ B. False

12. It is difficult or impossible to determine if a new CO₂ cartridge is fully charged.

- ☐ A. True
☐ B. False

13. A CO₂ mechanism is a necessary safety item when a low pressure inflation system is used on a BC.

- ☐ A. True
☐ B. False

14. Activating the CO₂ mechanism on a diver who is struggling at the surface will most likely have a calming effect.

- ☐ A. True
☐ B. False

15. List five reasons why a CO₂ mechanism may not activate when pulled:

16. The advantages of a CO₂ mechanism for emergency flotation outweigh any disadvantages.

- ☐ A. True
☐ B. False

Scuba Quiz

Answers: CO₂ Inflators

1. A. True. Yes, carbon dioxide is more compressible than other gases, but this is not the reason it does not seem to provide much lift at depth. At 70°F, CO₂ will liquify at a pressure of only 838 psig. This means a large volume of the gas can be stored in a small container.

2. A. True. Carbon dioxide can damage the lungs if breathed in strong concentrations. Be sure to flush all of it from your BC following inflation of the device with the gas. Be careful when assisting someone else that the CO₂ mechanism isn't activated while you are orally inflating that person's BC.

3. A. True. A gram of carbon dioxide does provide about one pound of lift at atmospheric pressure. Hence, a 32 gram cartridge will provide about 32 pounds of buoyancy at sea level.

4. B. False. The relative position of the CO₂ detonator is *not* the same in the water as it is on land. Buoyancy causes the mechanism to ride somewhat higher. Studies have shown that the time required for a diver to find and activate a CO₂ mechanism underwater is often more than a minute!

5. A. True. The principle of refrigeration is involved when a gas is cooled under pressure and then allowed to expand through a narrow opening. The gas quickly absorbs heat, lowering the temperature of the cartridge to below freezing. Care must be taken to avoid having the cartridge in contact with the skin when the detonator is activated.

6. A. True. CO₂ cartridges have exploded and the explosion can be very dangerous. Although such instances are rare, you should be aware that allowing cartridges to corrode severely is a hazard that can and must be avoided with proper maintenance. Render corroded cartridges harmless by using them to test the detonating mechanism, then replace the cartridge.

7. A. True. CO₂ cartridges are not cheap, so oftentimes divers do not replace them. Also, many divers do not feel the mechanism is needed, so they don't bother to replace the cartridge. This is not a good idea, as the next answer will show.

8. A. True. Failing to replace an expended CO₂ cartridge does more than just render the detonator inoperative. Water from inside the BC gets into the spent cartridge and creates rust. The rust particles can then get into the BC and slowly grind holes through the bladder. To preserve your BC, replace spent cartridges or remove and cap the CO₂ mechanism.

9. B. False. For maintenance and safety reasons, the CO₂ mechanism should be mounted near the top of a BC. Why? Because the water in a BC collects at the bottom and affects the mechanism and because a diver in distress has his or her hands up and is not likely to put them down to activate a detonator near the waist.

10. A. Less than 1,000 psi. While the pressure is not high, the amount of gas is large because it is stored in liquid form. The rapid expansion of this gas is dangerous if a cartridge ruptures, therefore, CO₂ cartridges should be treated with respect. This doesn't mean to fear them, but don't forget they are high pressure vessels.

11. B. False. Salt from seawater can crystallize in the passageway leading from the CO₂ cartridge to the BC and completely block the flow of gas. I have tested many BCs that could not be inflated with the pressure from a scuba tank. This problem can and should be prevented with proper maintenance.

12. B. False. Gas has weight, so there is a difference in the weight of a charged cartridge versus an empty

one. This difference can be measured with a sensitive scale or with a simple balancing device available as an accessory. Sometimes it can be difficult to tell if a CO₂ cartridge is full or not because the end gets corroded.

13. B. False. Although some will argue this point, I do not agree that the cartridge is essential because the BC can't be inflated if the diver runs out of air. I feel this way because of tests I have conducted. Low pressure inflators will still function when it is almost impossible to draw any air from a tank through a regulator. Don't try it, just take my word for it.

14. B. False. The CO₂ mechanism is designed to fully inflate the BC at the surface. The fully inflated BC often restricts the breathing of the distressed diver and can actually make the situation worse. If a CO₂ detonator is used to establish buoyancy, be prepared to vent some of the gas quickly to relieve anxiety and prevent panic.

15. Reasons why a CO₂ mechanism may not activate when pulled: expended cartridge; cartridge not screwed in far enough; corroded firing pin; passageway blocked with salt crystals; detonator cord wrapped around cartridge; detonator cord not pulled in proper direction (should be pulled, then pivoted from side-to-side).

16. The answer as to whether the advantages of a CO₂ mechanism for emergency flotation outweigh any disadvantages is up to the individual. I am, however, conducting a survey and would like to hear your opinion. Please send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to my attention at NAUI and include a note expressing your opinion. Which is greater, the advantages or the disadvantages? I will compile the opinions and send the results to you. NAUI's address is Box 14650, Montclair, CA 91763.

Did you learn anything new about CO₂ mechanisms? If you were surprised at many of the answers and found the information interesting, consider taking an equipment specialist course. You will learn a great deal of very practical information about CO₂ inflators and many other types of gear. One last thought: If you have a CO₂ mechanism, it must receive regular, careful maintenance to ensure reliable operation.

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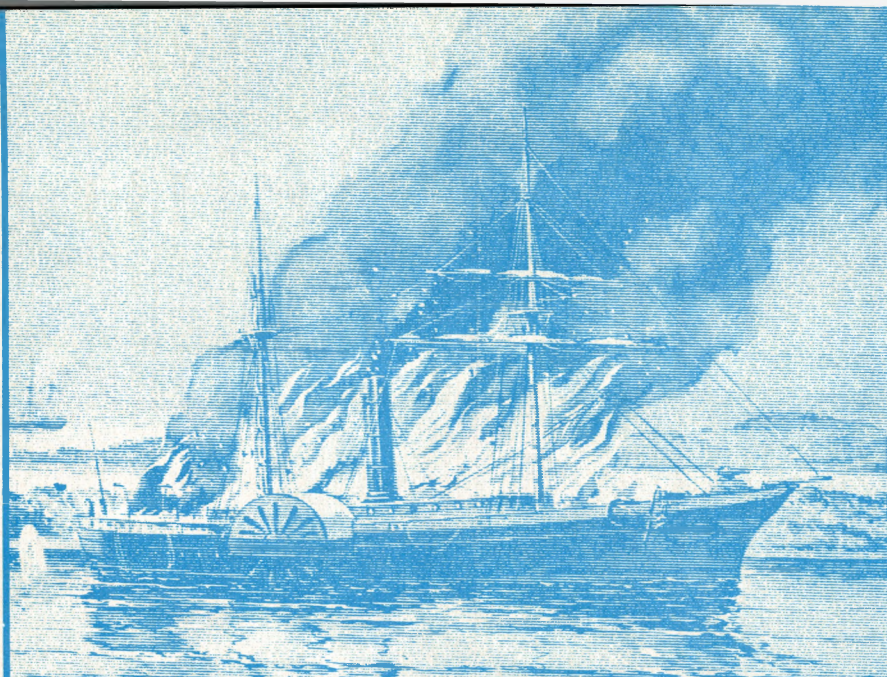
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Wreck Facts

BY ELLSWORTH BOYD

Do you remember the old saying, "Save your Confederate money—the South will rise again?" There's a new slogan out now: "Save your old toy boats—they might make you rich!" That's what Raymond E. Holland did—he saved his antique toy boats and sold one through Sotheby's Auctioneers, New York City, for \$22,000! From Holland's toy collection came the American tin riverboat *Puritan*, manufactured about 1880 by James Fallows and Sons.

Some friends of mine thought they would pull a cute coup—salvage the sunken remains of the real *Puritan* and see if the same buyer might be interested in artifacts from the original vessel. Interest peaked when I discovered that the 4,593 ton iron and steel paddler—built by the Delaware River Company, Chester, Pennsylvania—was the pride of the Fall River Line in 1889. But interest waned when I told my friends the *Puritan* was broken up for scrap in 1915. Sotheby's sold another toy boat from Holland's collection, the American painted tin boat *Niagara*, a pull toy: price \$7,425. In case you're upset because you missed the bidding, one boat remains unsold. It's the American painted tin boat *Monitor*, a pull toy. But don't ask me the opening bid. Remember, I tipped you off, so rummage through the attic and scour the flea markets and yard sales—antique toy boats might make you rich!

Sotheby's played a prominent role in another sale when it auctioned off two salvaged pre-Revolutionary War cannons to the Fort Ticonderoga Association for \$74,800. The cannons rested on the bottom of Lake Champlain for more than two centuries until three divers salvaged and

preserved them. The State of New York claimed the cannons, but divers Michael Davidson, Peter Vernoooy and Peter Munn took the state to court and won. New York Supreme Court justice Allen Myers ordered the finders be paid for discovering and preserving the artifacts.

The guns were captured by the French during the French and Indian War when the French overran Fort William Henry on the shore of Lake George in 1757. The French mounted the guns on the *Muskellunge*, a small warship that patrolled Lake Champlain, but in October 1759, the *Muskellunge* and two other vessels were scuttled. The three warships eventually were raised by the British, but the cannons remained on the bottom until the divers discovered them while exploring the lake.

Lake Michigan diver Richard Bennett, Wauwatosa, Wisconsin is after the leg-

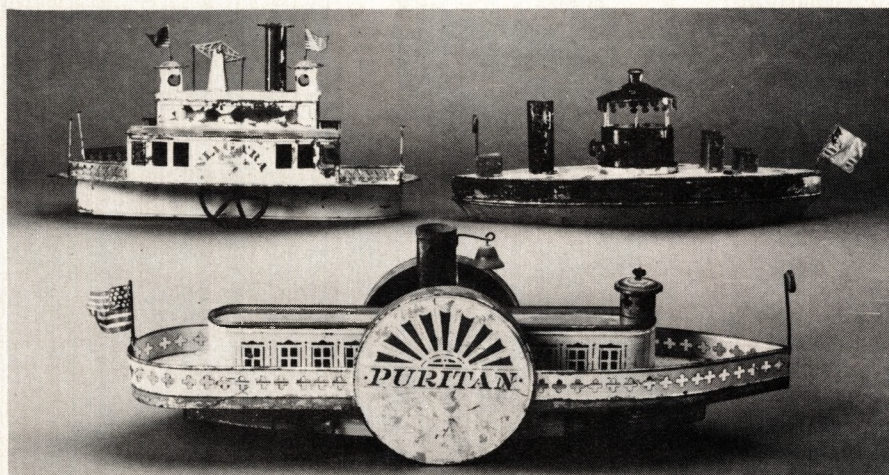
endary Poverty Island treasure and determined to make a strike. Legend says the French government, stymied by the Union's blockade of Confederate ports during the Civil War, shipped five chests of gold coin overland through Canada to Escanaba, Michigan in 1863. [See page 28, SDM, March 1986.] The gold was supposedly loaded aboard a schooner headed down the Wisconsin coast to another port, where it was to be carried overland to the Mississippi and then south into the heart of the Confederacy.

But off Poverty Island, a dot of land in Northern Michigan near Escanaba, French-Canadian brigands attacked the treasure ship and sank it—so the legend goes. Before the ship went down, the crew chained the chests together and tossed them overboard in fairly shallow water for later recovery. Bennett doesn't know the name of the vessel he's seeking, nor has he found any records of its passage or mission. But he believes the story and estimates he has spent close to \$100,000 on a search that began in 1968. This summer he will use a small submarine to continue his quest for the legendary treasure.

Mike Sheen, College Park, Maryland reports that he enjoyed diving with the Toledo, Ohio Submariners—led by Jerrie Strubie—on North Carolina's popular *U-352*. The surface was choppy, but conditions on the U-boat were excellent. Don Acheson retrieved a brass gear mechanism and Mike got a plastic marker plate from the torpedo tube flooding lever in the forward torpedo room. Mike was impressed by Roy Kogge, 75, who fulfilled a dream to dive the *U-352*. Steve Varney, a paraplegic, is impressive in the water too. He made more than 50 dives last year, many under tough conditions in the Great Lakes.

Blown out on the tanker *Atlas* the next day, the group revisited the Navy cruiser, *USS Schurz*. The wreck was full of cobia, amberjack, triggerfish, angelfish, barracuda, grouper and grunts. Souvenirs retrieved on the dive included a silver fork, the chief engineer's voice tube with a

(Continued on Page 54)



The toy boats *Puritan*, *Niagara* and *Monitor*. The *Puritan* sold for \$22,000!

photo/courtesy Sotheby's

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Photos by LARRY CUSHMAN

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Diving Medicine

BY ALFRED A. BOVE, M.D., Ph.D.

A reader wrote to ask whether a cold sore could be transmitted by buddy breathing. She developed multiple cold sores shortly after buddy breathing with a partner who had an active cold sore during a pool training session. The issue of hygiene in diving is an important one I would like to address this month.

The most common infection is probably a cold or upper respiratory virus that spreads among individuals who are in close contact for several days. This can be seen commonly on winter dive trips to warm climates. One or two people will have active colds and pass the virus to the rest of the group within a few days. The transmission patterns are varied, but a single uncovered sneeze or cough will spread virus laden fluid particles in the air that are inhaled by others nearby. Acquiring the virus is not the sole factor in determining whether you get sick. Individual susceptibility, previous exposure and antibody development, state of fatigue and other factors are all likely contributors to the outcome of an exposure.

Viral infections are most commonly spread by direct contact with body fluids. Since viruses do not survive long in a dry environment, you generally do not get infected by contact with such ordinary items as books, magazines, money, cameras, etc. You can get or spread infection by a sneeze; by sharing cups or eating utensils; and by sharing snorkels, masks and regulators. If you have a cold or flu-like illness, it is common courtesy to practice adequate hygiene to avoid spreading your illness to others.

The herpes virus causes the common cold sore and is readily spread by contact with saliva of an infected person. If you have a cold sore, do not share mouthpieces with another diver, likewise, avoid sharing cups, drinking containers and eating utensils. Herpes also causes infection of the genital organs and can be transmitted by sexual contact. Since sexual contact is rarely inadvertent and is not usually part of a diving operation, we will not discuss venereal disease.

Viruses that cause gastrointestinal illness including diarrhea and vomiting are readily spread by group contact. These viruses are also spread by body fluid contact. Often, upper respiratory infection is part of a "stomach virus" and spread of the illness via sneezing and shared mouthpieces is possible. Hand contact

also spreads the disease, so if you are ill with a stomach flu, pay special attention to keeping your hands clean.

Viral hepatitis can be spread by poor hygiene. The disease is sometimes acquired from contaminated shellfish (oysters, clams), but a spread from person to person involves a break in normal hygienic principles. Contamination of drinking water by waste water has produced epidemics of hepatitis, and living in close quarters and use of contaminated intravenous needles also spread the disease.

A new virus that has become an important problem in several unique populations is the HTLV-III virus, which causes

uncertainty concerning the ultimate outcome of this virus reaching the bloodstream. It is likely that most individuals exposed to the virus do not develop serious clinical consequences, but the exact incidence of infection without disease is not presently known.

In diving, it is highly unlikely that casual contact with an infected individual will result in infection. Presently, it is not clear whether the HTLV virus will survive in a wet mouthpiece, but indications are that the chance of infection with this virus from a shared mouthpiece is miniscule. However, it is probably wise for individuals infected with HTLV virus to avoid sharing dive gear mouthpieces.



photo/Paul Tzimoulis

Is buddy breathing safe?

acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS). (HTLV-III is short for human T-cell lymphotropic virus type III.) This has been found in populations in Europe, Russia, Africa and Haiti, and in the homosexual community in the United States. It is usually spread by intimate sexual contact; by injections of infected blood or blood products and by use of contaminated needles shared by drug users. HTLV virus may appear in the saliva, but the significance of this means of infection is still unclear. AIDS is not thought to be spread by casual contact or proximity alone. The consequences of being exposed to the virus are also not well understood. In one case where a brief exposure resulted in the virus being detected in the blood, the lack of subsequent exposure resulted in its disappearance from the bloodstream. There also is

BACTERIAL INFECTIONS

Bacterial infections are caused by single-cell organisms (bacteria) that can survive outside of the body if they find a suitable environment. Tuberculosis, a lung disease, can be spread by contact with clothing, towels, etc. contaminated by a person with the active disease. Fortunately, tuberculosis has diminished in the United States, but in underdeveloped countries may still be encountered. It is unlikely that a person in a dive group will have active tuberculosis, since the illness is usually serious enough that diving would be difficult. Early stages of the disease, however, may not produce obvious symptoms or illness. Persons with known active tuberculosis should not be diving. Besides the risk of spreading the infection to others, the infection can predispose to pulmonary barotrauma and air embolism. Active fungal infections that act somewhat like tuberculosis (e.g., histoplasmosis) present the same problems.

Certain bacterial infections of the lung (pneumonia) can also be spread by close contact. Persons with active bacterial pneumonia are too sick to dive and often require hospitalization. However, a developing pneumonia might not be appreciated in its early stages and a diver with the early, mild stage of pneumonia might dive successfully before becoming seriously ill. The major consequence of pneumonia is in the person infected. Bacterial pneumonia requires an early diagnosis and vigorous antibiotic treatment. Diving with pneumonia must be avoided at all cost.

Food can be contaminated bacterially
(Continued on Page 108)

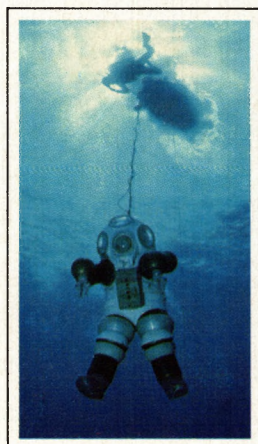
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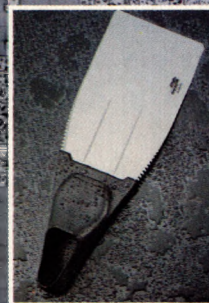
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Diving News From Down Under Budget Trips To The Barrier Reef

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY GERI MURPHY

Barry May, president of Reef Explorer Cruises, recently announced the offer of short term, budget dive trips aboard the M/V *Auriga Bay* for as little as \$475. These special four night, five night and six night cruises travel along the outer edge of the northern Great Barrier Reef, in the 160 mile stretch between Cairns and Lizard Island.

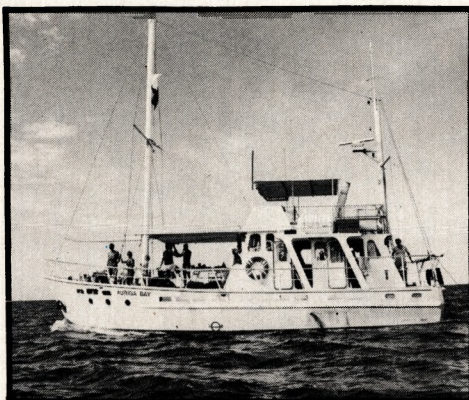
The M/V *Auriga Bay* is a custom built, 50 foot, steel hulled live-aboard boat. She carries 10 divers and has a cruising range of 2,000 miles. One of the first Australia live-aboard dive boats, she has logged thousands of miles charting the best underwater sites throughout the Great Barrier Reef.

Accommodations aboard the craft consist of two, two berth cabins that can convert to double cabins, plus two, four berth cabins fitted with single bunks. All cabins are fully air-conditioned and there are two showers on board. Special equipment includes an auto pilot, radar, satellite navigator, echo sounder and ship-to-shore radio telephone.

The M/V *Auriga Bay* is equipped with two Bristol seven cfm air compressors, an air storage bank and 16 scuba tanks. There is a side boarding ladder with a horizontal below-surface platform, as well as a stern diving platform. For night diving, the vessel has underwater flood lights. Rental dive lights are available. The *Auriga Bay* also trails a 14 foot aluminum dive tender powered by a 35 hp outboard motor.

The *Auriga Bay* is able to offer this new series of special budget trips because three short term, reef hopping cruises have been scheduled that stop at the northern Queensland Coast ports of Cairns, Port Douglas, Cooktown and Lizard Island. Divers can board the *Auriga Bay* at any one of these points and take a short trip (five or more days) to the next boarding point.

The first segment of the journey is a five day/four night cruise from Cairns to Port Douglas. This is the shortest leg of the trip and the one being offered for \$475 (U.S. currency). This economical cruise covers 50 miles of outer reef, stopping at such top dive sites as Hastings, Saxon, Norman, Tounge and Opal Reefs. The trip also includes a visit to the Sea-

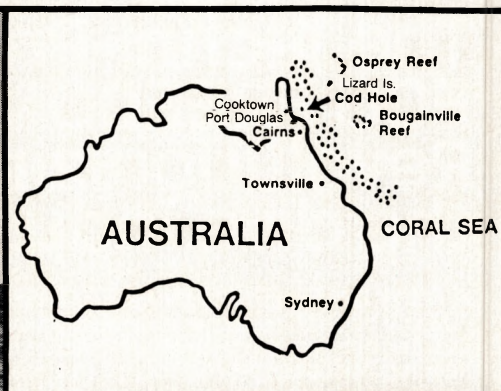


bird Sanctuary at Michaelmas Cay before concluding at Port Douglas.

The second segment of the journey is the longest, consisting of a seven day/six night cruise from Port Douglas to Lizard Island. This trip is priced at \$950 and takes guests along the outer edge of the world famous Ribbon Reefs and then on to Lizard Island. Dive sites along this leg of the trip include the spectacular Snake Gully, a 15 to 60 foot deep reef loaded with soft corals, clownfish and sea snakes. Pixie Pinnacle is a protected reef, 40 to 60 feet deep, with a spectacular array of macro creatures. Other exciting sites include Shark Ledge, Canyon Reef, Five and a Half and Barry's Bommie. The trip concludes at Lizard Island resort where guests can extend their dive vacation with a few days of island comfort if they choose.

The third segment of the *Auriga Bay* odyssey is a five day/five night southward cruise from Lizard Island to Cooktown. This leg of the journey is priced at \$620 and includes diving along the outer edge of the Ribbon Reefs. One of the highlights of the trip is a visit to the world famous Cod Hole. Here divers can hand-feed a family of nine giant potato cod (a type of grouper), ranging from 75 to 175 pounds in size. These creatures are awesomely large but extremely docile and friendly. They can be handfed and photographed at close distance at depths from 30 to 50 feet.

As with all segments of the *Auriga Bay* cruise, guests spend a comfortable evening in sheltered lagoons, often making after-dinner night dives. The *Auriga Bay*



New, short duration cruises are available on the *Auriga Bay*. The 50 foot vessel will travel from Cairns to Cooktown, stopping at Port Douglas and Lizard Island on the way. In each of the three travel segments divers will enjoy the best of Australian reef diving.

arrives in Cooktown in the early evening of the fifth day and passengers may spend the night on board or visit historic nearby Cooktown prior to flying out the next morning.

All three segments of the *Auriga Bay* odyssey are specifically scheduled to coordinate with Qantas flights arriving in Cairns International Airport from Honolulu. Travelers from the United States can now fly direct to Cairns from Seattle, San Francisco or Los Angeles by connecting through Honolulu. The Hawaii layover is very brief.

Travelers arrive in Cairns in the early morning and can spend the day exploring the city and acclimating to the new time zone and tropical weather. After a good night's sleep, guests board the *Auriga Bay* at Cairns, or travel northward to Port Douglas or Lizard Island for boarding at those departure points. Port Douglas is a one hour drive north of Cairns, while Lizard Island is a one and one-half hour flight aboard Air Queensland.

For further information about the new *Auriga Bay* budget dive trips, contact Dive In Australia, 680 Beach St., Suite 340, San Francisco, CA 94109; telephone (415) 928-4480.



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*Entry forms and contest rules available at participating Aqua-Lung Pro-Line Dealers. Entrants must be either a certified diver or a student enrolled in a diving class. Contest ends June 30, 1986. Void where prohibited by law.

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The Mark 150 RG

Graflex/Subsea Develops A Rechargeable Gel Cell Strobe

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY GERI MURPHY

For more than 20 years the Subsea Mark 150 has been regarded as the workhorse of the professional underwater photographer. No other strobe has quite matched its unique features and ultra wide angle, 150 degree coverage.

Even today, the pros speak fondly of the Mark 150 and many are still in use. But alas, there is one annoying problem that has haunted this strobe for decades. It is powered by an old fashioned 510 volt dry cell battery. This form of battery is becoming increasingly expensive and more difficult to find every year.

Graflex/Subsea has recently solved

this dilemma by introducing a high powered rechargeable battery package for the classic Mk 150 that can deliver 175 flashes at full power and up to 325 flashes at low power.

The new Mark 150 RG is powered by radical battery technology. It uses a gel cell instead of the more conventional nicad rechargeable batteries. The gel cell offers two distinct advantages. First of all, these cells do not take a discharge or recharge memory set as ni-cads often do. Also, gel cells are less expensive than ni-cads, so you can afford to have a couple of spares on hand.

The gel cell is a modern descendant of wet cell battery technology. It is something like a wet cell automobile battery, except the chemical inside is in jelly form and the battery case is sealed. Gel cells are used in some off-road motorcycles.

The gel cell provides more than adequate power for a full day of diving. With a full charge, the battery will produce 175 flashes on full power (150 watt-sec). That is almost five rolls of 36 exposure film. You can obtain 250 flashes at the 100 watt-sec setting and an impressive 325 flashes at the 50 watt-sec setting. A macro photographer could shoot nine rolls of 36 exposure film before recharging!

Still another advantage of the gel cell is faster recycle times. At the 50 watt-sec setting, the Mark 150 RG will recycle in two seconds flat! Recycle time at full power (150 watt-sec) is reduced from six seconds to four and one-half seconds—25 percent faster than the old battery.

The gel cell has also eliminated power tapering. The last flash is just as powerful as the first.

In conjunction with the new gel cell battery package, Graflex/Subsea has introduced an equally radical battery charger, which is fully automatic. The auto charger is a sophisticated "black box" that can charge the gel cell at either a normal or fast rate and shut down to a trickle charge when the battery has reached 95 percent of full capacity. The battery can be left on the auto charger indefinitely.

On the normal rate, a fully exhausted battery is charged in 12 to 16 hours. On the quick setting, the same battery can be charged in three and one-half hours.

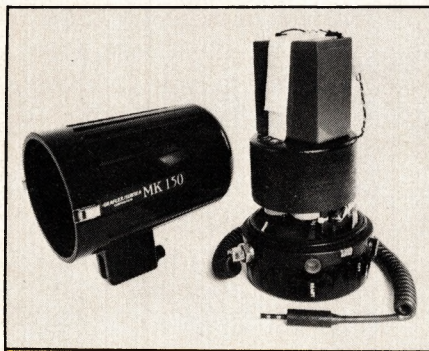
Furthermore, the black box is equipped with two red LED lights that show when the auto charger is properly connected and operating and let you know when the battery is fully charged. The auto charger will operate on either 110 volt or 220 volt AC electricity.

As for performance, the new RG model is just as powerful and just as reliable as my trusty Mk 150. It is the same size and configuration as the previous model and all accessory arms are interchangeable.

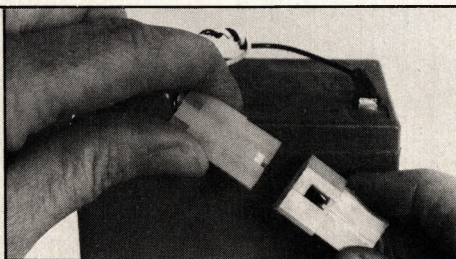
The new Mk 150 RG also offers all of those unique features its predecessor did, such as 150 degree angle-of-coverage, three different power output modes and a slave mode for remote firing. The RG comes in clear, black or transparent orange and is available with the connector of your choice. Prices start at \$591, for the black model with Nikonos connector. The Mark 100 is also available with a gel cell battery.

The Mark 150 RG is good news for professionals and advanced amateurs who seek a specialized underwater strobe with ultra-wide angle coverage.

For more information and specific prices, contact Larry Salvo, President, Graflex/Subsea Corp., 975 West 17th St., Riviera Beach, FL 33404 or telephone (305) 844-8937.



The Subsea Mk 150 RG has a rechargeable gel cell, held in place by a Velcro strap. The gel cell features a unique connector to eliminate polarization errors. The charger operates on two settings, for a quick or normal charge.





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DIT ACCREDITATION

The Divers Institute of Technology, in Seattle Washington, has been granted accreditation, for the third straight year, by the National Association of Trade and Technical Schools. To fulfill the NATTS standards, DIT underwent a detailed study. Factors considered included the school's history, enrollment, refund policies, faculty, admission requirements, integrity of operation and course offerings.

For more information about DIT and professional deep sea diving, contact Divers Institute of Technology, P.O. Box 70312, Seattle, Washington 98107 or call collect (206) 783-5542.

THOMSON/LIFEGUARD SYSTEMS

Bridget Thomson has joined Lifeguard Systems Inc. as training coordinator. Her experience extends beyond diving instruction; she is a registered nurse with experience in intensive care ambulance response. She has already been involved in many training programs throughout the East Coast as well as having been a CPR and first aid trainer at the DEMA show in Orlando, FL. She recently compiled a rescue training workbook for Lifeguard Systems.

WOMEN IN DIVING WORKSHOP

Do women who dive have special problems in the undersea environment? This topic will be discussed in a workshop, May 21 and 22 at the Bethesda, MD headquarters of the Undersea Medical Society (UMS).

The event acknowledges the fast-growing importance of the female diver, who now represents roughly one-quarter of the total sport diving population in the U.S. It is planned as part of an ongoing research project that began in 1978 with a workshop on diving and pregnancy.

An update on the effects of diving on both mother and fetus will be presented but the May workshop will focus on male/female differences in thermal balance, endocrinology, endurance and dexterity. Whether women are more susceptible to decompression sickness will be examined, as will the possible effect of taking oral contraceptives. The specific equipment needs of women underwater, their psychological concerns and possible legal aspects of diving while pregnant are also on the workshop agenda.

For more information contact the Undersea Medical Society, 9650 Rockville Pike, Bethesda, MD 20814; (301) 530-9225.

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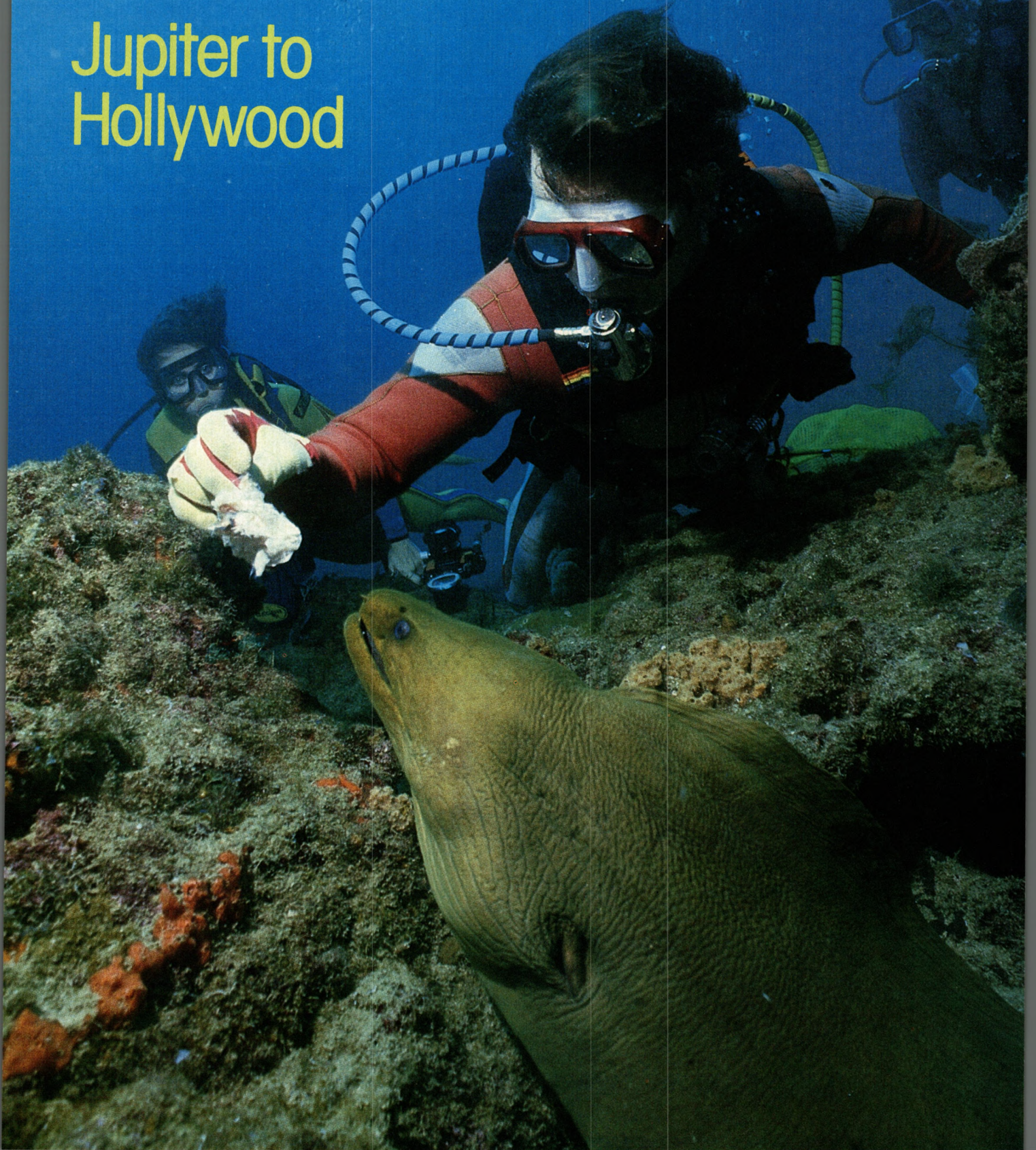
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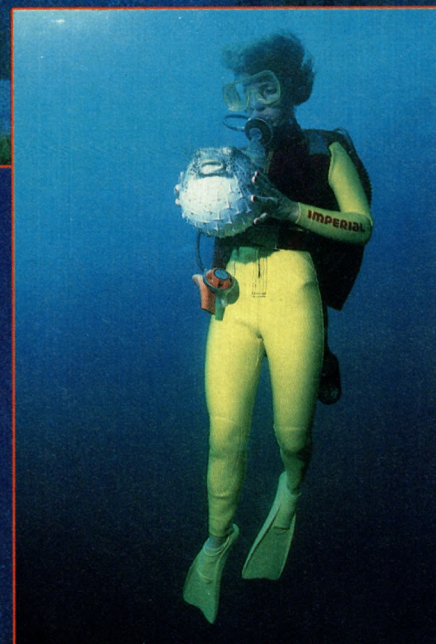
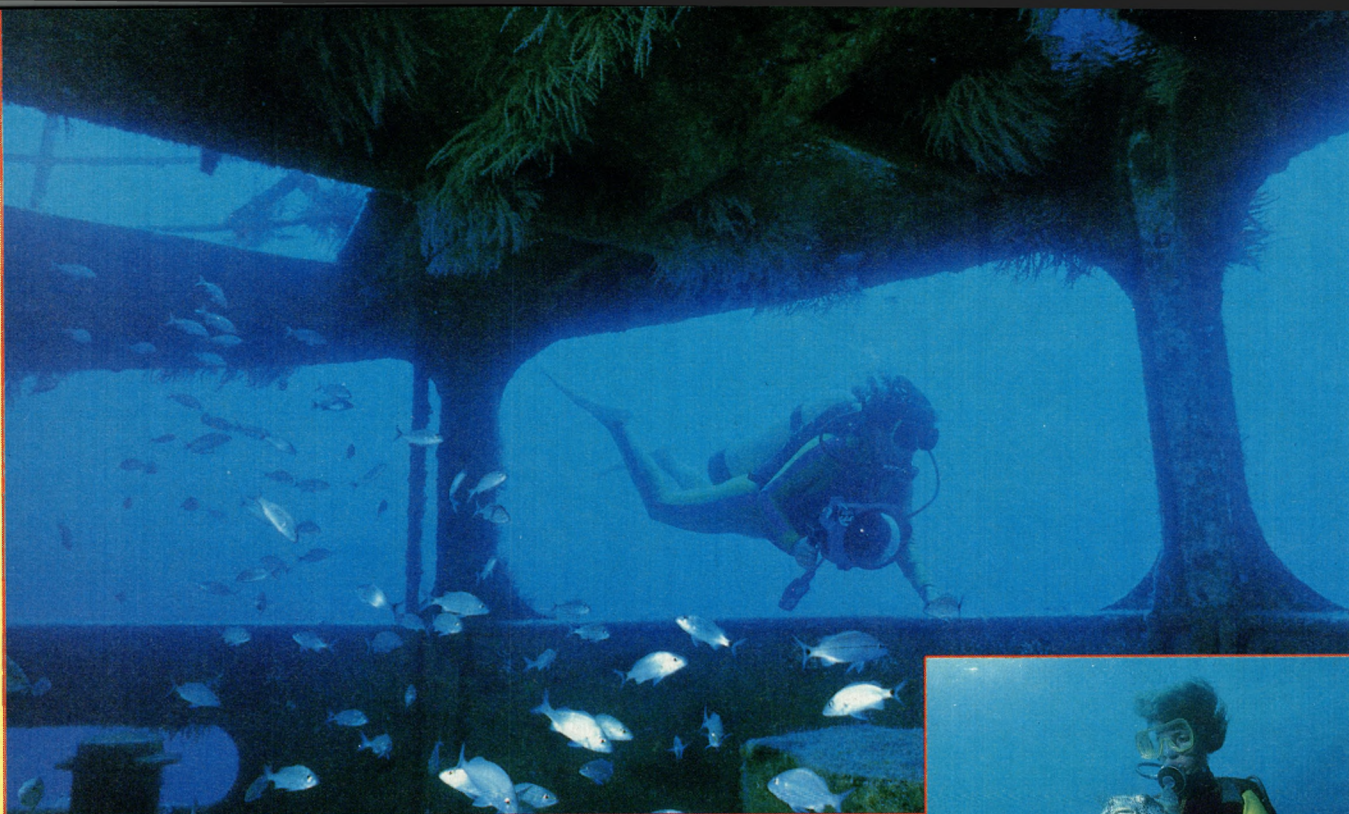
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Florida's East Coast

Jupiter to
Hollywood





The diving off Florida's east coast offers something for everyone, from wrecks to reptiles. Charter boats make access to these sites easy. Top: A school of grunts swims through the fantail of the *Mercedes* as a diver looks on. Clockwise from above: a school of jacks; a diver with a porcupinefish off Ft. Lauderdale; the colorful Jupiter lighthouse north of Palm Beach; a diver swims with a large turtle; wreck diving.



Florida's East Coast From Reefs To Wrecks

BY STEVE LUCAS

PHOTOGRAPHY BY
STEVE LUCAS AND RICK FREHSEE

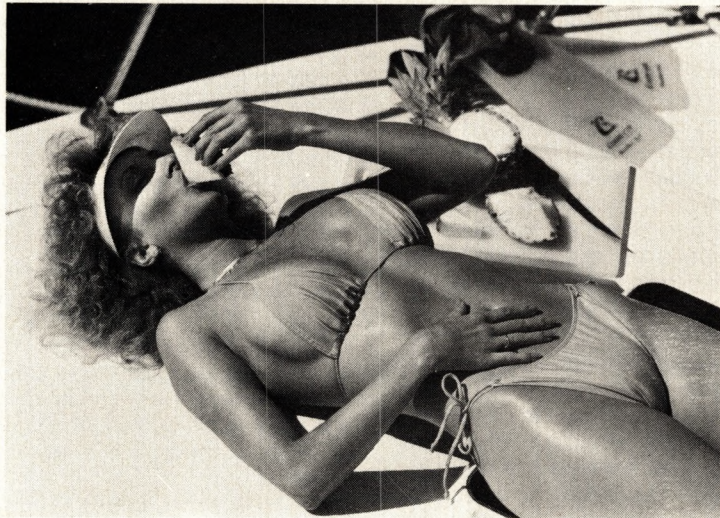
The big green monster weaved excitedly. The scent of our game bag preceding us, he had begun his open water dance before we even came close to his den. Completely away from cover, he turned quickly, snapping at his reflection in the dome of my camera lens. The smell of unseen food was maddening and he wasn't ready to share it with the moray inside my camera.

Like an animated seven foot vacuum hose, he inhaled the first chunks of bait dropped in front of his snout. Suddenly he jerked. A mate had emerged from deep within the den. Hidden just inside the hole, an underwater sand storm raged as the two greens tangled. Seconds later, his point apparently made, the big one returned. As if nothing had happened, he put his nose directly against the faceplate of one of my dive partners to beg for another bite.

Thirty yards away, another group of divers had located a nest of loggerhead turtles. As many as ten of the resting giants could be counted lying on the coral rocks. Ten feet beneath them, under an overhanging ledge, one-half dozen nurse sharks, some as large as eight and nine feet, rotated their beady eyes and quietly pumped seawater through their gills. Yards away, a wall of 20 pound jacks swam by in unison, almost totally blocking the sun. And, so went another average day of diving along the edge of the Gulf Stream on the coraline ridges of Florida's southeast coast.

Encounters with morays, turtles, sharks, dolphins, mantas and even gigantic whale sharks are considered the region's forte by divers who regularly venture out of the inlets near Jupiter, Riviera Beach, Palm Beach, Lake Worth, Pompano Beach, Fort Lauderdale and Hollywood. And, on top of the concentration of marine animals that swim with divers, this golden coast is quickly becoming a center for the sport's most popular activity—wreck diving.

Starting from the south and heading north, the faces of this vacation beach change quickly. From the coarse brown sand between Hollywood and Dania, the scene livens as you venture across the 17th Street causeway into the non-stop party atmosphere of Fort Lauderdale Beach's A1A strip. College students and "yuppies" alike come to soak up the sun



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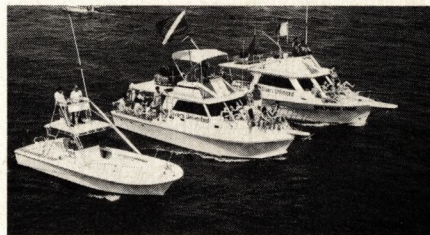
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Florida's East Coast

and escape. Parasails blossom and ascend above the waves to give visitors a breath-stealing view of the shoreline. Above them, a dozen airplanes constantly trail banners, simultaneously advertising everything from rock concerts to itsy bitsy bikini contests.

Just miles north of this year-round spring break party, life and the beaches are more subdued. Condominiums line the shore and the average age of resident and visitor increases by 30 to 40 years. Between Pompano Beach and Lake Worth, middle America and the new rich have come to construct their beach-front homes.

At Palm Beach, America's old wealth is apparent. Mile after mile of the beach is private. Tall, perfectly trimmed hedges try to hide the estates from the outside world. Rolls Royce Silver Clouds, Jaguars and Mercedes 600s commonly replace Fords, Toyotas and Hondas in the manicured circular driveways of these mega-million dollar mansions.

Then, almost without warning, the beach becomes naturally wild: no buildings, no mansions, no condos—just grasses, sea oats, bushes, fine sand and ocean. North of Riviera Beach, one of Florida's widest, most inviting and often unpopulated shorelines runs for miles.

This region of Florida has dozens of adventures for vacationing dive enthusiasts and their friends. You can take a dinner cruise down the intercoastal waterways of any of the major cities on a river steamer. In Lauderdale, splash into a manmade ocean from the top of an immense collage of water flumes, or play in the million gallon wave pool of Six Flags Atlantis. If you want to see the ocean perform, you can watch sharks being fed and porpoises dancing at Ocean World.

Feel like a wager? Catch a fast action game of jai alai in Dania or Palm Beach, or visit the harness races at Pompano Park. Want to see the real Florida wilderness? Take a swamp buggy or airboat ride out across the Everglades. Want to run away to Africa? West of the turnpike, near Palm Beach, you can drive through Lion Country with its eight miles of paved roads that wind through 640 acres of recreated African veldt. Lions, rhinos, zebras, antelope, chimpanzees and giraffes roam free while you are happily captive in your car. Want to say you had dinner at a movie star's place? The Burt Reynolds Dinner Theatre at Jupiter features internationally known stars in after dinner productions. Burt himself has been known to visit with his guests.

If you are a history fan, at least one of the historic Palm Beach mansions is open for tours: Whitehall, the former home of Henry Morrison Flagler, one of the state's earliest entrepreneurs. He was

co-founder of the Florida East Coast Railway and it was responsible for connecting the peninsula to the Keys and Key West. Whitehall has been magnificently restored with many of the original furnishings from its turn of the century origins.

Most of the dive sites near the Palm Beach and Fort Lauderdale area are one-half mile or more offshore. Fortunately, dive charter operators and dive resort hotels can be found along the coast.

At the north end, running past a brilliant red lighthouse near Jupiter inlet, the Gulf Stream comes very near shore before abruptly turning seaward. As a result, the waters are usually clear and fast moving. Here, and on most of the southeast Florida coast, drift diving is the only practical way to explore the reefs and ledges. Each group of four to six divers is usually given a trail line and float. In 45 minutes of drifting with the current you can cover as much territory as a mile or more! When the allotted bottom time is up, the boat will be waiting within a few yards of your marker.

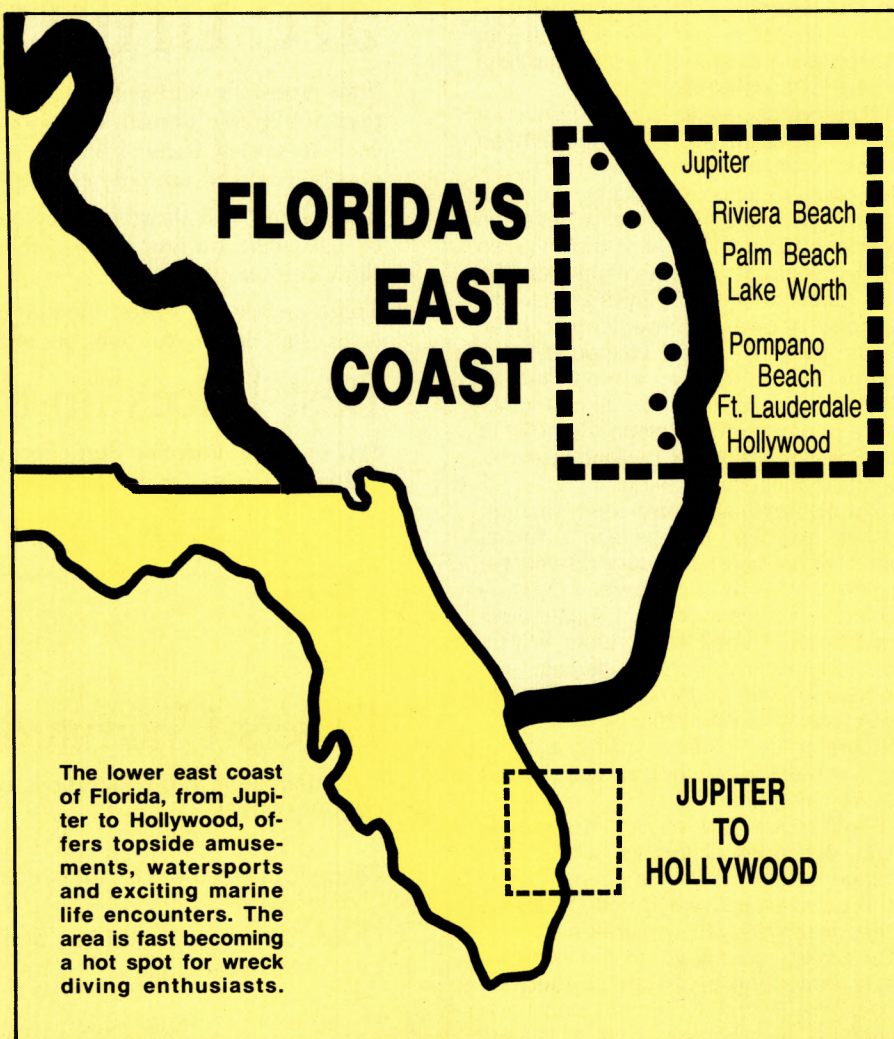
Dive sites near Jupiter range from depths of 40 to more than 100 feet. One of the most popular ledges is **Jupiter High**. As deep as 90 feet in the sand, the break jumps almost straight up to a shelf at 65 feet. It lies right beneath the Gulf

Stream and the volume of water flowing past is awesome. If it were not for the many large holes and crevices where you can hide, the current would make it all but impossible to stop for a closer inspection or photograph.

Several miles in total length, the ledge is filled with the same types of marine life you would expect to see in the Caribbean. Schools of several hundred jack crevalle, weighing 20 to 30 pounds each, are likely to accompany you on your dive. Big green morays, including the pair we found and fed, frequently swim out of hiding when divers approach.

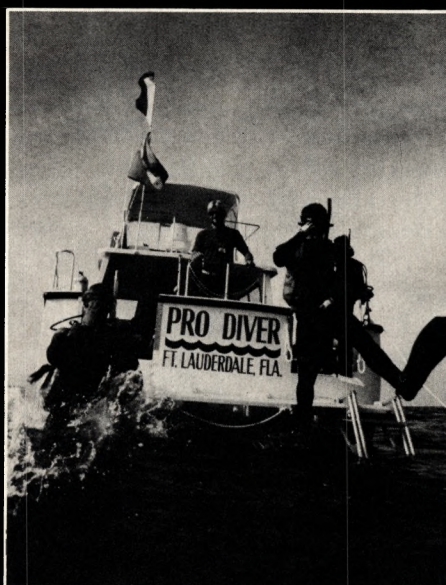
If any single dive has become synonymous with the Palm Beach area, it is certainly the wreck of the 185 foot Greek luxury yacht **Mizpah**. Relatively intact in 90 feet, she lies only one and one-half miles from the Palm Beach inlet. Purposely sunk as an artificial reef, it is now a fish preserve with no spearing or collecting allowed. On the seafloor for more than 16 years, the *Mizpah* has begun to deteriorate. Going inside is no longer wise. Thousands of baitfish swarm about her hulk and a large school of grunts can usually be found inside her gashed bow.

A few feet away, the patrol craft **PC 11** lies broken in half. When drifting with the current, the two ships allow a diver to



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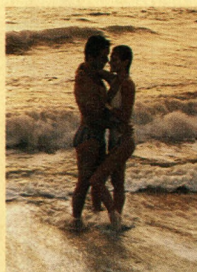


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Florida's East Coast

swim almost uninterrupted above the hulks of each for more than 100 yards. Not far behind the patrol craft's stern, the 30 foot freighter **Amarilys** is completely gutted. Schooling fish hide from the current inside the barrier created by her hull and bulkheads.

One-half mile south of the Palm Beach/Lake Worth inlet in 85 feet is one "wreck" that could only be found in Palm Beach: a perfectly good (at least before it was sunk) 1967 **Rolls Royce Silver Shadow**. Worth more than \$25,000 at the time it went to the bottom, the car was donated by a local businessman in an effort to attract attention to the need to construct more artificial reefs. Apparently his tactic is working. Since its September 1985 sinking two more wrecks, a barge and the 120 foot freighter **Eisvad**, have joined the Rolls to form what is being touted as the **Palm Beach Triangle**. Schools of barracuda, amberjack and other fish have already begun to populate the area.

Farther south, reefs such as **Breakers**, the **Trench**, **Cable Crossing**, **Double Ledges** and **Paul's** rise from two to eight feet off the sand. Constantly fed and replenished by the stream, these reefs often swarm with angels, butterflies, snapper and grouper.

Down the coast from Palm Beach, along the beachfront cities of Lake Worth, Boynton Beach, Delray Beach, Boca Raton and Pompano Beach, the reef takes on some of its most dramatic forms. The breaks frequently jump 10 to 15 feet from the sand and are totally encrusted with large sponges. Not as frequented by the large marine animals, the reefs called **Lynn's**, **Delray Ledge**, **Fingers**, **Boca North** and **Hillsboro** begin to take on much the same appearance as those in the Keys, minus the large elkhorn corals. Schools of up to 100 blue lined grunts swarm about their faces. Smaller tropicals are much more common here than on the reefs a few miles to the north. Some sections are riddled with small caves and overhangs alive with glassy minnows. Several reefs harbor some of the large brain corals commonly found deep in the Keys.

Between Fort Lauderdale and Hollywood are many of the most popular, and most often dived, reefs and wrecks in Florida. The area's dive operators have worked closely with state and local officials in an effort to promote this region as the fastest growing dive resort area in the United States.

Many divers rate the sites near here with those found in the Middle Keys. Populations of snapper, parrotfish, jacks and other fish are often rich. On reefs such as **Fisher's Pedestal** and **Lobster Ledge** it is not uncommon to find large barracu-

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da lined up under the overhanging shelves waiting to have their gills cleaned by tiny blue gobies.

Beneath a crust of diffusely colored sponges, schools of snapper often run in unison as large blue angels dart in and out of thick, low corals. Divers shine their lights under every ledge looking for signs of lobster. At times two, three or more of the wary crustaceans can be spotted sharing the same hole.

At places along the Gold Coast the reef breaks are close and shallow enough to be snorkeled from shore, although visibilities are often quite limited. Numerous 10 foot deep reefs with populations of tropicals, sponges and soft corals can be found not far off the beach. Beyond the shallow line, two additional reef banks run in depths of 30 to 60 feet and deeper. These are generally found one-half to several miles offshore. If you plan to beach dive or snorkel, be aware that this activity is restricted by many South Florida cities. Ask before you find yourself being reprimanded or fined. In all cases, a floating dive flag is required by state law.

Adjacent to and running south of the Port Everglades inlet toward Dania are the reefs that are among Broward County's best known because of their location near John U. Lloyd State Park. The middle reef, **Barracuda**, comes within 20 feet of the surface and the deeper one, **Hammerhead**, begins at 60 feet.

The shallow reef has lots of staghorn, brain, star and the other corals common to the Keys. Its top is a patchwork of sea-fans waving above the coral tunnels that provide hiding places for spotted morays and lobster. Hammerhead's coral fingers often run seaward, forming faces similar to those found on the shallow inshore reefs. Its top is overgrown with enormous lacy sea-fans and sponges.

Wrecks and artificial reefs are quickly becoming Fort Lauderdale and Hollywood's principal dive attractions. One of the most recent additions was purposely placed near Hollywood at the southern edge of Broward County. Donated, transported and sunk by the Tenneco Oil Company at a cost of \$500,000 (not counting the original cost of the structure), the reef is made up of the three major sections of

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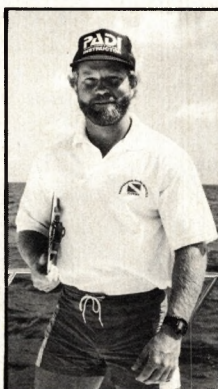
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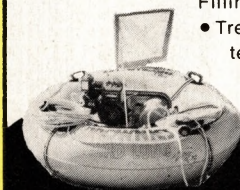
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Florida's East Coast

a retired **Oil Drilling Platform**. It was formerly in use in the Gulf of Mexico. Proven very effective as fish attractants, the platforms are in depths of 60 to 120 feet at intervals of approximately 75 to 100 yards. The shallowest one-third is comprised of the upper derrick structure, the middle one-third is the working deck and the deepest one-third is the legs. According to the Broward Dive Industry Association, this artificial reef is open to spearfishermen. Spearfishing is not permitted on other Broward artificial reefs.

Numerous other wrecks can be found along the Gold Coast. One of the old favorites is the **Houseboat**. Eighty feet down for more than 20 years, it is totally encrusted with sponges and gorgonians. Several dozen barracuda serve as her constant sentinels and hundreds of tropicals can be found inside her hull or on the surrounding reef.

A very photogenic lost **Freighter Anchor** can be seen in water barely 30 feet deep. Apparently abandoned by a ship that found itself far too close to shore, the five ton anchor's chain stretches out across the sand. Several large blue angelfish have declared the site their home and make excellent photo subjects.

One of the more unique wrecks on the Gold Coast is that of a **DC-6** airliner. Lying in 50 to 60 feet, it is totally stripped of interior, instruments and windows. Only the cockpit windows remain. Relatively intact, minus its four engines and parts of its wings, the plane recently was further mutilated when a freighter allowed its anchor chain to be dragged across the fuselage, placing a large dent in its frame.

Of the area's two largest wrecks, the **Rebel** is the newest. Sunk in mid-summer 1985, the 150 foot freighter sits in 110 feet of often very clear Gulf Stream water. It is 85 feet to its deck and the ship has attracted a tremendous colony of fish in less than a year. Barracuda can often be counted by the hundreds and big schools of deep ocean, as well as reef fish work their ways around its base and across its decks.

Without any question, the most famous wreck, and most often dived, is the **Mercedes**. She made the national network newscasts almost every night for months when she slid up on the beach in a 1984 Thanksgiving storm. Abandoned by her crew, she became known as the backyard eyesore of Palm Beach socialite Mollie Wilmot. The *Mercedes* was declared a derelict and the state of Florida had to come up with the several hundred thousand dollars to get her off the beach.

After months of snapping tow lines and burning up tugboat engines—and after thousands of pounds of beach sand were dug away, the ship allowed itself to be refloated. But the story of the *Mercedes*

was only just beginning.

Everyone had assumed arrangements would be made to sink the ship somewhere near the spot where she had been beached in Palm Beach. But the folks in Fort Lauderdale had other ideas. Enough money was raised to lure the salvors into bringing the *Mercedes* to Fort Lauderdale's Port Everglades. Local dive clubs quickly helped to clean the ship, remove dangerous doors and otherwise prepare it for sinking.

On a very rough and windy day in the spring of 1985, with nearly 1,000 boats full of spectators surrounding her at a safe distance, several hundred pounds of explosives ripped gaping holes in the sides of the ship. In a matter of minutes she was resting upright with her stern in 90 and bow in 100 feet of water.

The ship sank adjacent to a low coral reef. Around its stern are several large, flattened mounds of coral, overgrown with deep red gorgonians. A school of blue lined grunts lives near these mounds and another school of 40 or more barracuda is almost always found hovering behind the aft fantail. Near the bow, several over-sized parrotfish and blue angels stay close to one of the explosion holes. On the foredeck, a school of baitfish frequently hovers above the ship's winch.

Having established itself as one of Florida's prime dive destinations, the Palm Beach/Gold Coast area is making diving vacations fun and easy to reach. With hundreds of diversions for divers and non-diving companions, many resort hotels are offering special packages in association with the area's major charter operators. Both Palm Beach and Fort Lauderdale have major international airports with travel connections available from virtually anywhere.

With shipwrecks to explore, lots of marine life to see and plenty of out-of-the-water family fun, Florida's lower east coast is just waiting. The only thing between you and a Palm Beach/Gold Coast dive vacation is a phone call to confirm your reservations. Go on—make it now!

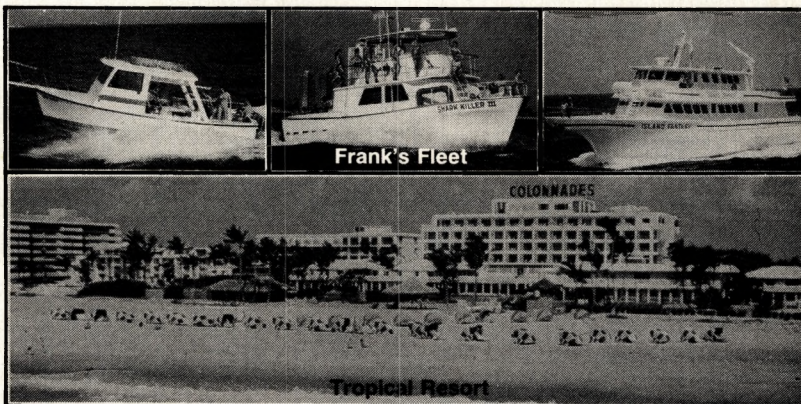
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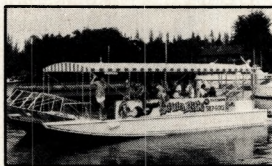
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The Cressi Combo

Acqua Silicone Mask And Snorkel

BY JIM WALKER

Turning the pages of Cressi-sub's equipment catalogue, you can't help but be impressed by the wide selection of attractive masks. From large traditional styles, with oval faceplates and black neoprene skirts—to ultra-mini goggle styles with prescription lenses, there's something for everyone. Cressi's newest offering, and its top-of-the-line, is the Acqua Silicone.

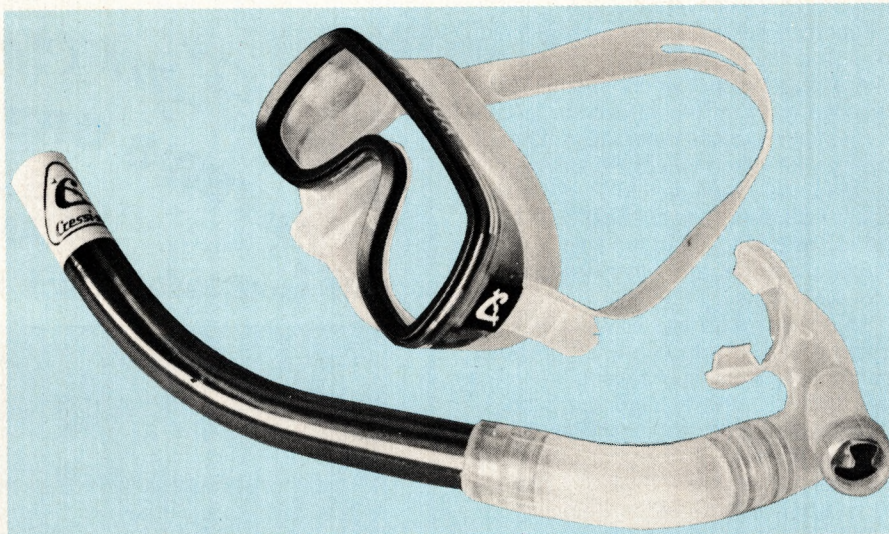
This mask features a single tempered glass lens that measures only five by two inches at its maximum dimensions. The semi-goggle shape of the lens allows it to be set in close to the face. This results in an excellent field of view (my estimate would be about 90 degrees top to bottom and side to side). This also results in low-

er volume, which translates to easier mask clearing. Lower volume also means the freediver will expend less of his/her precious air to equalize pressure inside the mask.

The Acqua Silicone frame is rugged plastic in opaque red, yellow or blue, or clear blue. All have a black plastic border around the lens. The mask's skirt is soft,

hypoallergenic silicone rubber, resistant to breakdown by sunlight and ozone. (The Acqua is also available with a neoprene skirt.) It has a comfortable double face seal and will transmit light to a model's face, enhancing underwater photographs. The nose pocket is easily reached for ear equalization.

The Acqua Silicone, like other Cressi



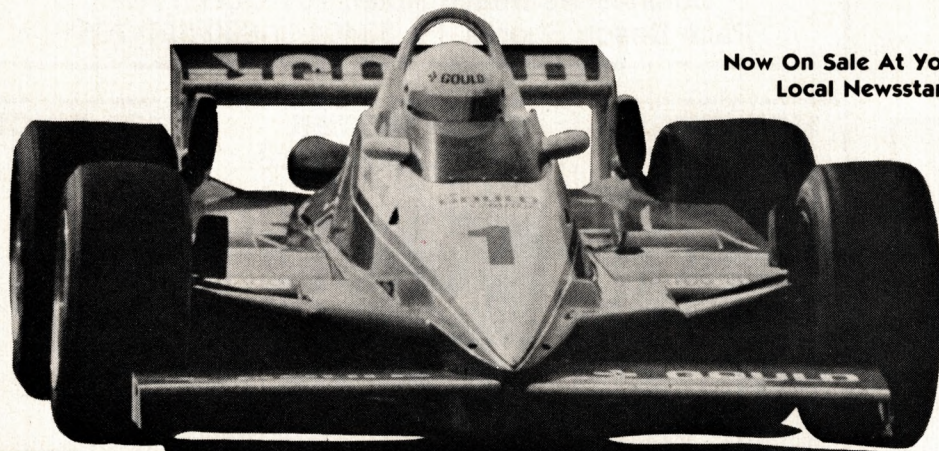
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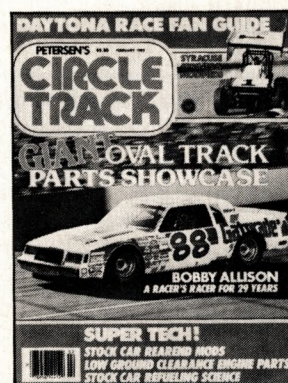
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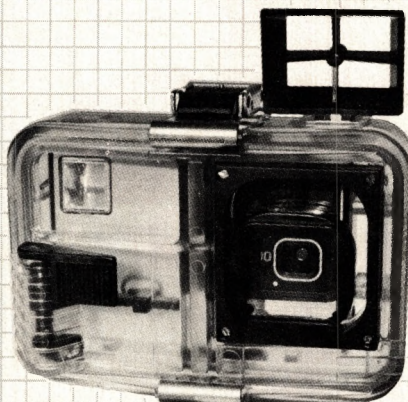
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DISC-CASE PACKAGE

#5290 Includes: Keystone 1050 Camera

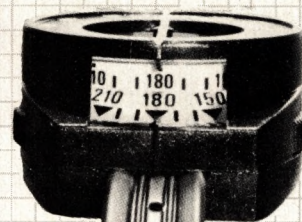
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CRESSI COMBINATION

masks, features plastic guides that slip into slots in the frame to secure the mask strap. When the guides are slipped out of the frame, the strap can be quickly adjusted. With the guides in place, the strap can be tightened easily, even underwater, with a pull on a strap end.

The perfect partner for the Acqua Silicone Mask is Cressi's Easy Purge Snorkel. It has a flexible silicone rubber mouthpiece and a plastic barrel with a three-quarter inch inner diameter for easy breathing. The model with the clear blue barrel complemented our mask well.

Two features of the Easy Purge make it stand out: a self draining valve and two twist-joints. The one-way valve branches off the mouthpiece, at the lowest point of the snorkel. As the diver raises the snorkel above the water's surface, gravity will cause any water in the barrel to drain. Even the mouthpiece will drain if raised above the surface.

The twin twist joints allow you to custom position the angle of the mouthpiece and barrel for maximum comfort. I found this an especially nice feature as I've never been completely satisfied with the barrel angles of non-adjustable snorkels. The top twist joint allows rotation of the barrel to position its curve where you want it. The second joint allows you to angle the barrel forward and back to eliminate pull at the mouthpiece.

The Acqua Silicone Mask sells for \$58. With neoprene skirt and opaque red, yellow or blue frame, the Acqua is \$38.50. The Easy Purge Snorkel sells for \$24. Try the combination at your nearby Cressi-sub dealer.

CELEBRITY CERTIFICATION

Storm Field of ABC Eyewitness News had such a special entry level experience during his stay at the Living Seas in EP-COT Center/Disney World with Walt Hendrick, Sr. and the training staff, that he has decided to go on with his diving education. At this writing, Butch Hendrick of Lifeguard Systems Inc. was to begin training Storm in NAUI Open Water I during April. The training sequence was to be filmed by ABC crews for a six night series on learning to dive and where to dive in the Northeast. The series was scheduled to appear in the Tri-state area in early May. Check your local TV listings for exact dates and times.

Fields elected to train and perform his open water dives in the New York area in order to show how easy it is to learn to dive in your own backyard. A list of regional dive shops will be made available to interested viewers through ABC.

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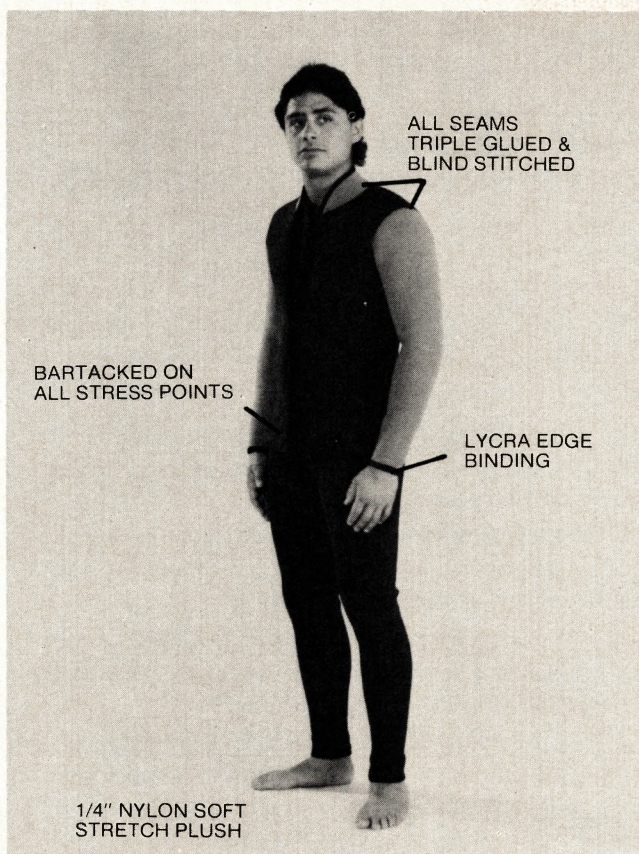


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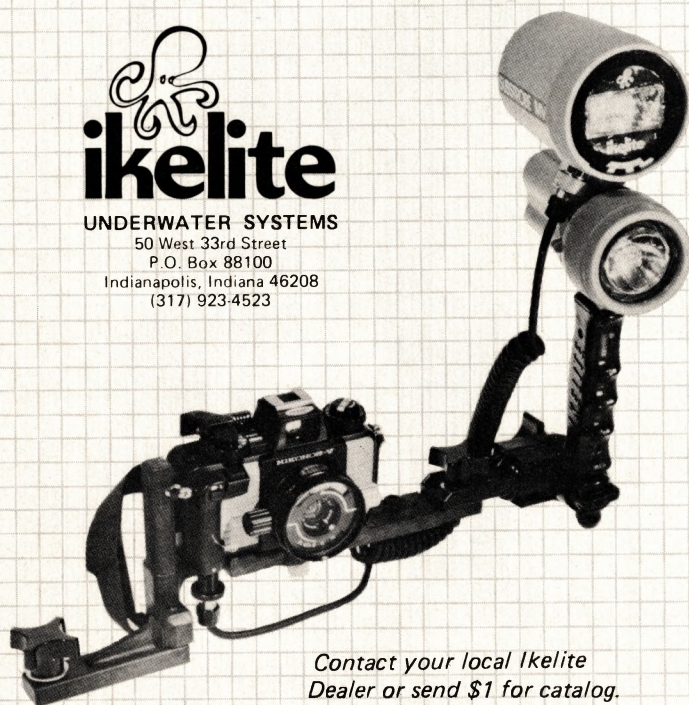
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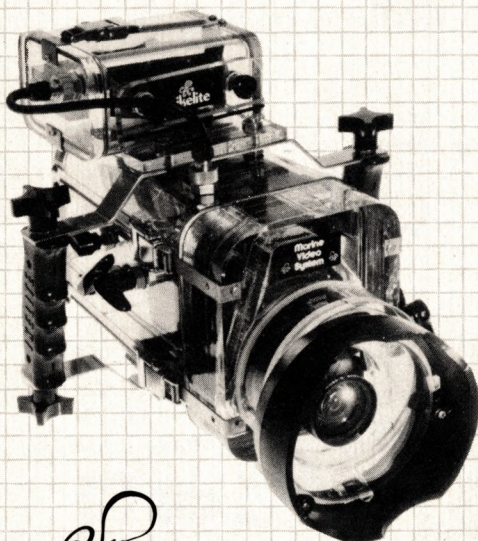
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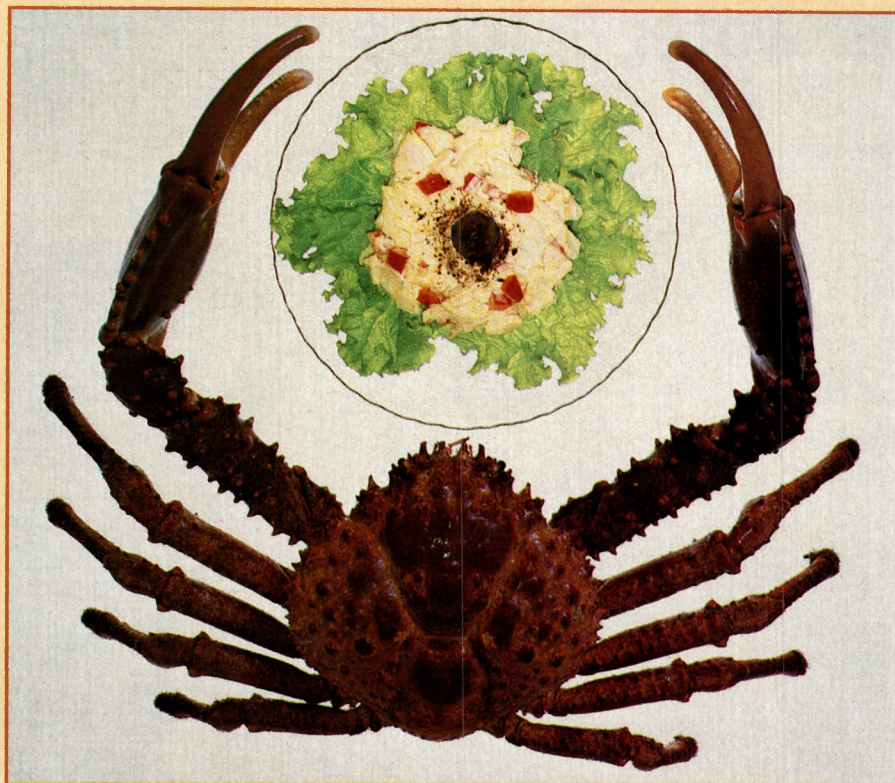
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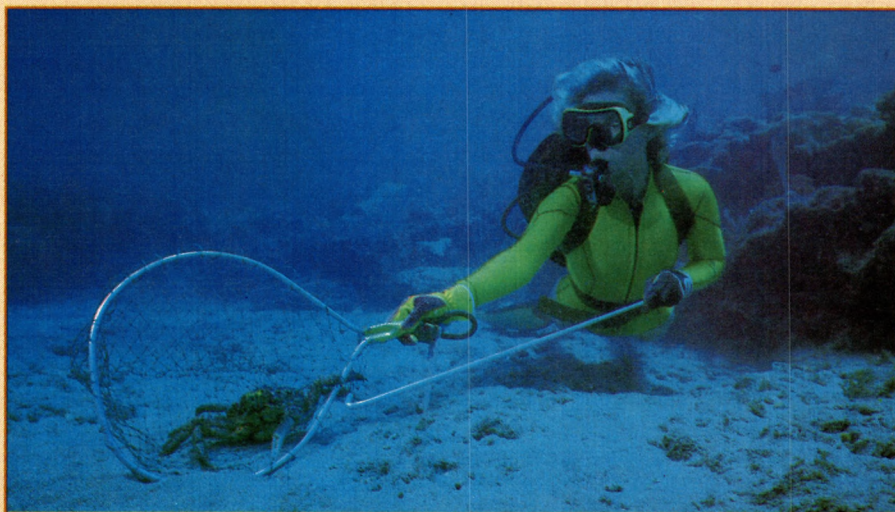
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SPIDER CRAB

A Surprising Culinary Delight

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY MARK LAWRENCE



Eleanor Klein nets a spider crab off Fort Lauderdale, FL. Spider crabs can also be captured by hand—however, in a net, hands or goodie bag, the animal is able to pinch with considerable force if it gets the opportunity. Top: Curried crab salad.

Few people consider the spider crab (*Libinia emarginata*) attractive. Its orbicular body rides upon eight skinny legs. Two enlarged forelimbs and claws wave in the surge. Numerous protrusions and coarse hairs cover the carapace. Small spines rim the main shell and encircle the claw bearing legs. Atop short flexible shafts, eyes sit inside protective depressions. A deep H-shaped groove marks the carapace. On the uneven shell's surface, algae, barnacles and other encrusting organisms often set up camp. Coloration varies from reddish-brown or dark olive to light tan. Like the spiny lobster, the last leg segments have many bristles. A typical arthropod, the spider crab can regenerate claws and legs. In both sexes the right and left claws are of equal size, but the male's claws grow noticeably larger than those of the female. Unlike many other crab species, the spider's long curved fingers meet only along the tips.

Within its vast Atlantic coastal territory (Nova Scotia to the Gulf of Mexico), the spider exhibits some seasonal move-



Tolbert's delicious crab imperial. Normally, only the claws of the spider crab are eaten. Often, only one claw is taken, and then only from larger males.

ments. In Delaware Bay the highest concentrations occur during the summer months; studies indicate these crustaceans move offshore during the winter. In South Florida such migrations are less pronounced. Although there are reports of *emarginata* eating starfish in captivity, this is not thought of as normal behavior. A scavenger, like most other members of the family Majidae, the spider crab is usually seen feeding on algae growths.

Besides having larger claws, the male crab also has a much narrower abdomen than the female. Gravid females usually stand with their segmented abdomen

(Continued on Page 46)

SDM's U/W Photo Class

Underwater Strobes

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY JIM AND CATHY CHURCH

There is no single strobe that is best for every U/W photographer—there never has been and never will be. Choosing the best one for you is a matter of matching strobe features to the style of U/W photography you wish to do and the logistics of your dive travel. Price alone is the least reliable guide. Therefore, the purpose of this lesson is to guide you through the main features of strobes so you can make your own decision.

TTL EXPOSURE CONTROL

TTL (Through-The-Lens) exposure control works like this: Strobe light, reflecting from the subject, passes through the camera lens and strikes the film for the exposure. A sensor inside the camera measures the amount of light reflecting off the film and signals the strobe to turn off when there has been enough light for the exposure. Thus, the strobe exposure is determined by the duration of the flash.

The TTL system will adjust the flash duration for a proper exposure regardless of your strobe-to-subject distance or the aperture you choose (within a predetermined range). It doesn't matter if you use a close-up lens, extension tube or filter, the amount of light actually reaching the film determines the flash duration. There are limitations, of course. If the strobe is too close to the subject, or the aperture is opened too wide, it might not be able to shut off in time; and if the strobe is too far away or the aperture closed too much, even a full flash will not produce enough light for a proper exposure.

TTL strobes work best with subjects of average brightness and reflectiveness that fill the center picture area in the viewfinder. It is this center area the built-in metering system measures. TTL is also useful in fast action situations where the strobe-to-subject distance changes quickly, and you don't have time to readjust the aperture.

TTL strobes don't work well if the parts of the subject you want to light don't fill the center of the picture area. For example, if the TTL sensing area (the center of the picture) sees unlit distant background, the strobe will overexpose near subject areas outside the sensing area. Likewise, with multi-subjects (such as a school of small fish) where some of the subjects are closer to the camera than



TTL strobes: Ikelite Substrobe MV (center). From left: Substrobe 150, Sea & Sea YS 100, Helix Aquafash 28, Oceanic 3000, Subsea Mark 100 (manual), Nikonos SB-103, SB-102.

others, the TTL will be confused. The closest fish will be overexposed, the farthest fish will be underexposed. Thus, even if you decide to purchase a TTL strobe, we strongly recommend you learn how to use manual exposure control for the above special situations.

MANUAL EXPOSURE CONTROL

All TTL strobes can also be used on manual exposure control. When set for manual control, the strobe delivers the same amount of light regardless of distance, aperture or subject configuration and lighting style. Thus, unlike TTL strobes, a manual strobe will not compensate for your error in judging strobe-to-subject distance. The instructions with your strobe will indicate specific strobe-to-subject distances for different film speeds and apertures. With ISO 100 film, for example, the instructions may indicate an aperture of f/8 for a strobe-to-subject distance of three apparent feet. Thus, you hold the strobe three feet away from the

nearest subject area. Use manual exposure control whenever your subject doesn't fill the center of the picture area, or if you have multiple, near and far subjects (the school of fish again).

WIDE BEAM STROBES

Wide beam strobes have U/W beam angles of about 90 degrees or more. These are needed to cover the large picture areas of wide angle lenses. With normal lenses, the excess beam angle helps get light on the subject even if you aim the strobe incorrectly. However, the wide beam will also illuminate more suspended particles in the water. Wide beam strobes are usually larger and more expensive than normal beam strobes because they need more power to spread light over larger areas.

NORMAL BEAM STROBES

Normal beam strobes usually have U/W beam angles that cover the picture area of a 35 or 28mm lens. These are of-



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GUIDE NUMBERS

Strobe power outputs are often expressed with guide numbers. A guide number (GN) is surprisingly easy to use: To find the aperture, divide the GN by the strobe-to-subject distance. For example, with a guide number of 24 and a distance of three feet, the aperture is $f/8$ ($24/3=8$). Likewise, to find strobe-to-subject distance, divide the GN by the aperture. For example, with a GN of 24 and an aperture of $f/8$, the distance would be three feet ($24/8=3$). To remember how a GN works, think GAD (Guide number = Aperture $\times$ Distance).

Any strobe will have different guide numbers for different ISO film speeds. So to compare strobes, you must standardize with one speed, such as ISO 100. The GN may be for feet in air, meters in air or for U/W apparent feet. To convert a GN for meters to a GN for feet, multiply the GN for meters by 3.3. To convert a GN for feet in air to an U/W GN for apparent feet, we divide the air GN by a correction factor of three. Many manufacturers divide by a correction of two. If the strobe manufacturer provides a strobe exposure table of apertures and strobe-to-subject distances, you determine the GN by multiplying any aperture by its corresponding distance (GAD).

The TTL system has a sensor built into the camera body that measures strobe light reflecting off the film when the exposure is made. As the duration of the strobe flash is calculated from the amount of light actually reaching the film, the exposure is not affected by aperture or lens.

ten preferred for close-up and extension tube photography because they are smaller and easier to handle underwater and the narrow beam is easier to control for creative lighting. These strobes can be smaller and less expensive because they don't need to illuminate a large picture area. A compact, normal beam strobe is ideal if you wish to specialize in close-ups of tiny sealife.

WIDE BEAM ADAPTERS

Some normal beam strobes have accessory adapters you place over the reflector port to widen the U/W beam. The idea is to provide a wide beam for wide angle work and a normal beam for smaller subjects. The wide beam adapters will, however, reduce the light intensity of a strobe by at least one f/stop because the light is spread over a wider area.

Consider the size and weight of the camera/strobe system. If close-ups are your main goal and wide angle photography is secondary, consider the smallest strobe available. If wide angle is your

main goal and close-ups secondary, consider a larger, more powerful strobe.

POWER SUPPLY

The power supply is a critical factor because it determines the recycle time between flashes, the number of flashes from a fresh battery and the amount of effort you must spend on battery maintenance. Before buying a strobe, look up the specifications: Translate the rated number of flashes into the number of rolls of film you can expose before changing or recharging batteries. If the strobe uses disposable alkalines, how many cells does it use and how much will they cost? If the strobe uses rechargeable ni-cads, how long will they take to recharge? The power supply will become incredibly important if it limits your underwater photography during an expensive dive trip to a remote location.

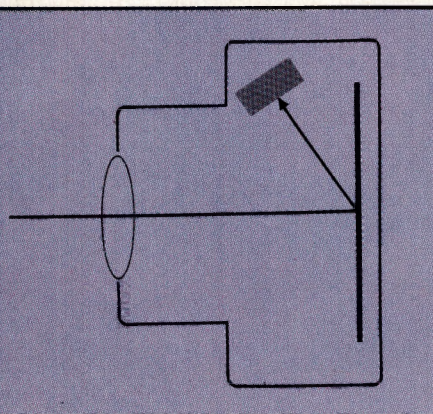
OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Size and weight will be important if you travel frequently. The smallest possible strobe head and the shortest strobe arms will be a blessing when you are trying to cram everything into a single camera case. And, for reliability, two small strobes are better than one!

A built-in, narrow beam light is great for checking strobe aim at night and for close-ups, but is hard to see in bright light. If a strobe doesn't have an aiming light, attach a small U/W flashlight to it with tape or a rubber holster.

User-detachable cords can save a lot of frustration. Because shorted cords are the most common cause of misfires, having a spare allows you to change the

(Continued on Page 55)



SUBMERSIBLE TTL STROBES

	NIKON SB-102	NIKON SB-103	HELIX AQUA 28	SUBSTROBE MV	SUBSTROBE 100	SUBSTROBE 150	SUBSTROBE 225	OCEANIC 3000	SEA & SEA YS 100 TTL	SUBATEC S 200 TTL	SUBATEC S 250 TTL
Exposure control	T/M	T/M	T/A/M	T/A/M	T/A/M	T/A/M	T/A/M	T/M	T/M	T/M	T/M
Manual settings	full, 1/4, 1/16	full, 1/4, 1/16	full, 1/2	full	full, 1/2, 1/4	full, 1/2, 1/4	full, 1/2, 1/4	high, low (1/2)	full	full, 1/2, 1/4, 1/8	full, 1/2, 1/4, 1/8
Slave mode	yes	no	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Battery	6 C	4 AA	6 AA, a	4 AA	6 D	RNP	RNP	BN	4 AA	5 C	10 n
Charge time (hours)	—	—	—	—	—	3/15	3/15	12-14	12	8-9	8-10
Number of flashes	70n, 120a	50n, 130a	80a	180n	200/400	150, 300, 600	120, 240, 480	up to 350	70n, 130a	150, 210, 300, 500	300, 420, 600, 1,000
Recycle time (sec.)	5n, 14+ a	6n, 9+ a	3	6/4	6/3/2	6/3/2	3.5	5n, 9a	5-2	4-2	4-2
Beam angle	28mm	28mm	28mm	28mm	110°	110°	110°	110°	28mm	96°	96°
Optional W/A diffuser	yes	yes	yes	no	nr	nr	nr	nr	yes (20mm)	nr	nr
ISO 100 guide number	106/53/26 (air)	66/33/16 (air)	32/16 (uw)	24 (uw)	105 (air)	120 (air)	145 (air)	33/24 (uw)	24 (uw)	52, 36, 26, 18 (uw)	52, 36, 26, 18 (uw)
User-detachable cords	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	no
Aiming light	yes	no	no	no	yes	yes	yes	no	no	10 & 20w	10 & 20w
Approx. size (in.)	5.5 x 8.5	3.75 x 6.75	4.5 x 6	4.2 x 3.3	5 x 7	5 x 7	5 x 7	5.5 x 7.5	4.3 x 6.3	3.5 x 6	3.5 x 9.8
Approx. weight (lbs.)	3.7	1.7	3	1	6.25	6.25	6.25	4.5	2.25	2.75	3.75

T = TTL; A = auto with remote sensor; M = manual; RNP = removable ni-cad pack; BN = built-in ni-cad battery; 3/15 = 3 hours with quick charger, 15 with slow charger; a = alkaline; nr = not required; (uw) = underwater; w = watts; n = ni-cad; C = C-cell; D = D-cell; AA = double A cell.

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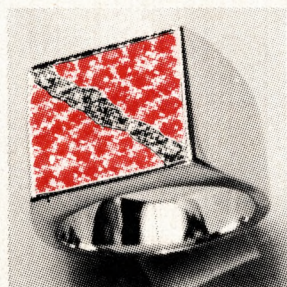
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SPIDER CRAB

(Continued from Page 41)

lowered, perhaps to permit better water circulation around the developing eggs. Apparently as the eggs mature, they change color from orange to tan. The author has found eggbearing females from late May until mid-October.

At this time there are no game laws pertaining to spider crabs. Since this is not a traditional catch item, little information has accumulated. Certain obvious actions still make sense. Despite the year-round open season, divers should exercise special care during the summer. Eggbearing females should not be taken. Many divers voluntarily restrict themselves to taking only one claw per animal. Such practices, as Chuck Majors pointed out, "at least give them a fighting chance." A clawless crab has little hope of feeding and defending itself. Carrying it a step farther, several divers claim to take only the larger male's claw; female claws yield little meat comparatively.

Spider crabs inhabit almost any bottom that offers some shelter. Rocky or coral ledges seem to be most favored. Usually hiding in the shadows during the day, spider crabs may cruise the open reef tops at night. Night or day, if the creature senses danger, it will back into the closest hole. With its claws protecting its vulnerable stomach, wedged deep in the back of a crevice, the crab waits until trouble swims on. Using a slender tickle stick, most divers patiently nudge the crab back out into the open. Once the animal is out, divers can either barehand it or net it. Keep in mind that even when confined to a net, the crab can inflict a very painful lesson in respect. Since all the crab's strength is concentrated in just the tips of the claws, a male spider crab nip leaves a definite mark in both your memory as well as on your hand. After swinging the arms out to full extension, pin the animal to the bottom with one forearm. With one motion, your free hand removes the claw. When released, crabs run for the nearest shadow. Should you still be kneeling or lying on the bottom, don't be surprised if the nervous critter darts for you!

If the journey from sea to kettle will last more than an hour, pack the crab in ice. Crabmeat spoils rapidly. As with most crabmeats, cooking before freezing is strongly recommended.

A mature male spider crab looks threatening. In reality, rather than fight with intruders, these shy crabs would gladly yield. Every year, more divers discover the fearsome looking claws make great snacks. If you want to try something different from the sea, you ought to take another look at spider crabs. You may never call them beautiful, but you may call them dinner!

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MAJOR DELIGHT

- Crab claws
- 3 T mayonaise
- 1 tsp. mustard
- ½ tsp. horseradish
- ½ Lemon
- Tabasco sauce (to taste)
- Celery salt (optional)

To boiling water, add a lemon quarter, then the crab claws. Cook 5-10 minutes or until meat turns opaque. While the cooked claws cool, mix mustard, mayonaise and horseradish together. Add the juice of a lemon quarter to the sauce. In addition to stirring in three drops of Tabasco sauce, try a dash of celery salt. When the shells are cool enough to handle, dig in.

CURRIED CRAB SALAD

- 3 Large cleaned crab claws
- 3 T mayonaise
- 1 tsp. mustard
- ½ tsp. curry powder
- ¼ C red onion
- ¼ C red pepper
- ¼ Lemon
- Black pepper (to taste)
- Paprika (garnish)
- Cherry pepper or parsley (garnish)

After boiling the crab in water with a lemon quarter, allow the meat to chill. When it's cool, clean and chop it into small pieces. Blend the mayonaise, mustard, black pepper and curry. Dice a quarter of a medium red onion and a quarter of a red pepper. Fold in the onion, pepper and crab meat. Curry flavoring strengthens the longer it sits; the more you allow your mixture to chill in the refrigerator, the better the curry will season your salad. When serving, garnish with a cherry pepper or some parsley and dust with paprika.

TOLBERT'S CRAB IMPERIAL

- ½-1 Dozen crab claws
- 2 Egg yolks
- 1 Egg
- ¾ C mayonaise
- 1 tsp. Worcestershire sauce
- 4 Drops Tabasco sauce
- ½ C capers
- 1 tsp. bay seasoning
- ½ C shredded Parmesan cheese
- ½ tsp. paprika

Start by mixing the two egg yolks, one whole egg and the Worcestershire and Tabasco sauces together. Fold in the crab meat, capers and bay seasoning. Preheat oven to 450°F. Pile into individual baking dishes. Lightly coat the top of each mixture with mayonaise, then spread finely shredded Parmesan cheese across the top. After baking for ten minutes (or longer) to produce a deep golden brown color, sprinkle the paprika on top. Serve hot.

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Canon's
New
Shallow
Water
Camera
System

The Aqua Snappy

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY
BY GERI MURPHY



Above: The Aqua Snappy with accessory base, close-up lens and close-up frame. Set up in this manner, the camera can take topside photos three inches from the subject. Left: The camera without attachments. It features built-in flash and automatic exposure, film loading, wind and rewind.

Canon has just introduced its first amphibious 35mm camera, designated the Aqua Snappy AS-6. It is one of those new breeds of auto-everything, lens shutter cameras that eliminates the mysteries and confusion of camera operation.

While the Aqua Snappy does not attain the professionalism of a Nikonos system, nor the depth capability of a Hanimex Amphibian, it does fill a niche in underwater photography. It is the ideal shallow water snapshot camera for the neophyte. It works well for simple pictures in swimming pools, tide pools and on shallow coral reefs.

It was not Canon's intention to produce

a camera solely for underwater use. Instead, the AS-6 is designed to be an all-weather outdoor camera for such action sports as: snow skiing, mountain climbing, sailing and river rafting. It will operate in the pouring rain or in the middle of a desert sandstorm.

As a by-product of this all-weather design, the Aqua Snappy will also operate underwater to a guaranteed depth of 33 feet. The lens and built-in flash are environmentally sealed and pressure proof to that depth.

The camera body is constructed of a very tough but lightweight space-age plastic. It is gun metal gray and orange.

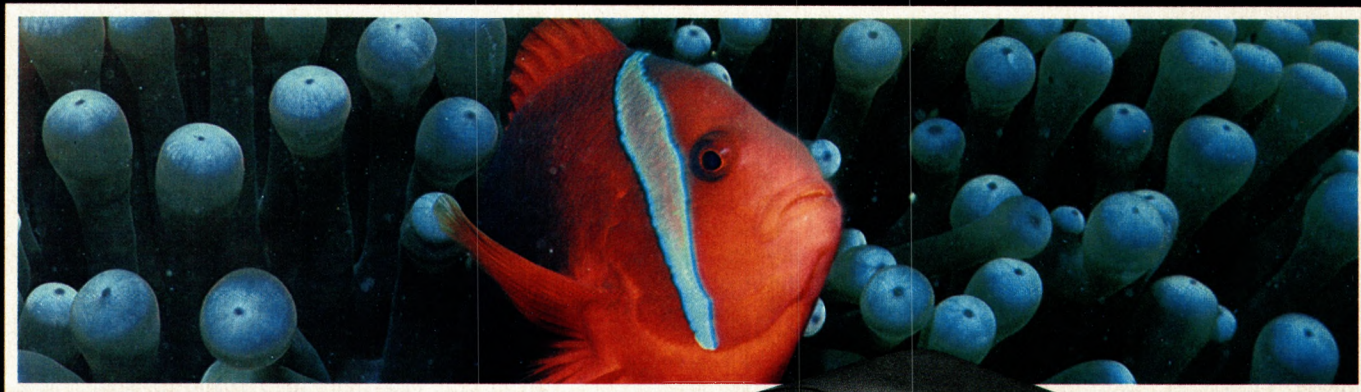
Rubberized panels on the front and back provide positive hand grips.

The back of the camera swings open much like a door. Stainless steel hinge and latch pins ensure long lasting operation in a wet environment. The door is secured by means of a cam-type latch with a spring loaded safety lock that prevents accidental opening. A large molded rubber gasket seals the door so it can be used underwater. A smaller O-ring type seal ensures the battery compartment is also waterproof.

The beauty of this little camera is that just about every function is fully automatic. It has only two controls: an on/off

LIGHT ARTILLERY

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Patent Pending

switch for the flash and a shutter button. Operator errors are next to impossible.

Although the Aqua Snappy is outwardly simple to operate, it is a fairly sophisticated "smart camera," controlled by a computer chip. For example, it can read the new magnetic stripe DX coding on 35mm film cartridges and automatically set the ISO film speed for proper exposures. There is no manual film speed control because this adjustment is made internally and electronically.

The AS-6 offers auto film loading for both convenience and error reduction. You simply insert the film cartridge, draw the film leader across the back of the lens and close the door of the camera. Push the shutter button three or four times and the film is set on frame #1.

Auto film wind is another marvelous feature. Simply press the shutter button and the camera takes the picture, then automatically advances to the next frame. When you reach the last frame, the Aqua Snappy automatically winds the film back into its cartridge.

The Aqua Snappy features a 35mm built-in, fixed focus lens. It is sealed from the environment by a flat optical glass window. On land, the lens operates as a normal 35mm lens, while underwater it behaves like a 50mm.

There is no focus ring for this lens, as the 35mm wide angle provides a fairly good depth of field. On land, optimum sharp focus is at 10 feet. Underwater, optimum focus is at five feet. The lens itself has five glass elements and a maximum aperture of f/4.5.

Another feature of the Aqua Snappy is, of course, auto exposure. There is a light sensor within the viewfinder window, one inch above the camera lens. As is typical with most automatic lens/shutter cameras, the Aqua Snappy will select the optimum shutter speed/aperture combination for available light. The automatic exposure coupling range (for ISO 100 film) runs from a low light level setting of f/4.5 at 1/40 second to a bright sunlight setting of f/11 at 1/250 second. The manufac-

turer recommends using a film with a speed of ISO 100 on land and possibly an ISO 200 or 400 film underwater.

The camera has its own built-in mini-flash for indoor and night photography; fill-in flash outdoors; and close-ups underwater. Once the flash is switched on, the automatic exposure circuitry selects the correct shutter speed and aperture. The flash range on land is 5 to 10.7 feet with ISO 100 film. Longer flash distances can be achieved with faster films.

Underwater, the flash range is from 3.3 feet to 6.7 feet with ISO 100 film. You can achieve a 3.3 feet to 10.7 feet range with ISO 400 film. A flashing red indicator in the viewfinder tells you there is insufficient light and means you should turn on your flash.

By now you are probably wondering where this little camera gets the energy for all these automatic features. The AS-6 is powered by only two AAA batteries, which fit in a small compartment on the underside of the camera. A fresh set of alkalines will provide enough power for 50 rolls of 24 exposure film without flash or five rolls of 24 exposure film with flash. In other words, you can shoot three rolls of 36 exposure film with flash, so bring along lots of batteries.

Canon has made a very clever move with the Aqua Snappy. They have packaged this camera as a complete system and eliminated the necessity of buying additional accessories. A total of eight components come with the camera as stock items and there are additional niceties such as a lens pouch, neck strap and lens cap. When I opened the Aqua Snappy box, I felt like a kid at Christmas with my first electric train set.

A key component is the accessory base, which straps around the camera body and allows attachment of all sorts of different accessories, including close-up framers, sports finder, close-up lens and lens cap.

The sports finder is handy for quick framing action shots topside and is a necessity underwater where the photog-

rapher wears a facemask. This device slides onto a shoe mount on the top of the accessory base and locks into place.

A special close-up lens fits into the bayonet mount on the front of the accessory base. It is positioned directly in front of the primary lens and allows for sharp focus at close range, both above water and underwater.

A close-up frame also fits onto the accessory base and allows accurate measurement and framing of close-up pictures on land. Focus distance is approximately three inches from the front of the camera lens.

A rod replaces the frame for U/W use. It allows accurate distance measurement (9.5 inches) for close-ups.

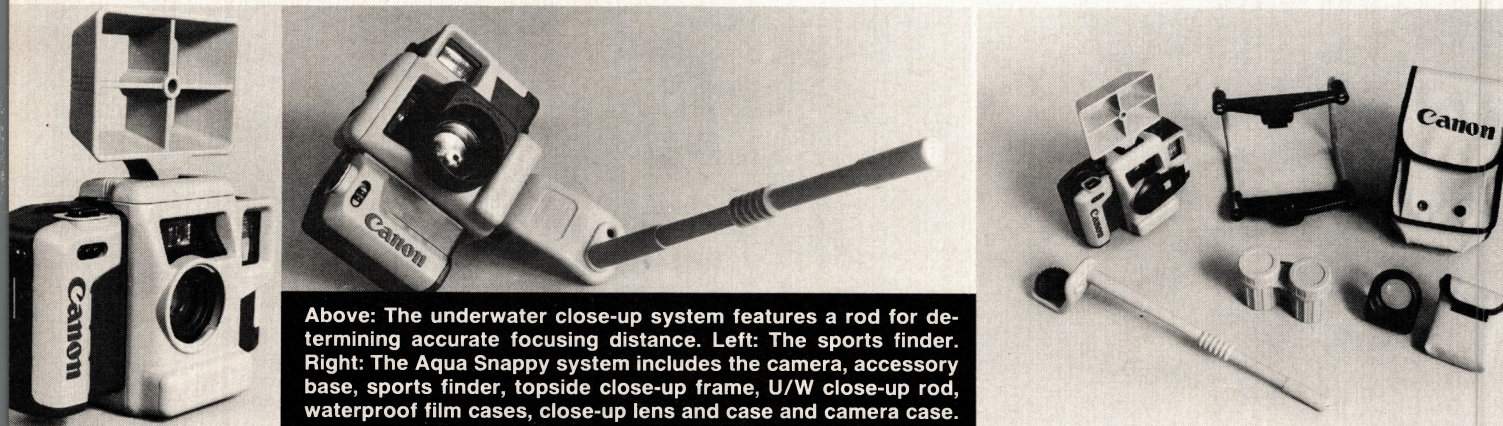
A small camera case functions as a quick draw holster and allows the stripped down camera to be carried on a belt. This is very handy for standard indoor or outdoor photography.

There is a larger system case into which the camera and all accessories fit. This features a zippered top panel and a waist strap that allows it to be strapped to the hip. Both the large and small cases are made of a waterproof fabric, complete with drain holes.

One more item worth mentioning is a dual set of waterproof film cases. This pair of plastic film containers features special screw-on tops and O-ring seals. Two rolls of film can be carried with the camera—even underwater. The film cases snap onto the camera neck strap.

SDM tests of the Aqua Snappy proved quite satisfactory. The camera performed as advertised and produced acceptable snapshots. Considering the number of accessories packaged with this camera, it is an ideal system for the person who knows nothing about photography but wants to begin.

Retail price of the Aqua Snappy alone is \$160. The complete kit, with accessories, is \$200. For more information see your local Canon dealer or write to: Canon USA Inc., One Canon Plaza, Lake Success, NY 11042. >



Above: The underwater close-up system features a rod for determining accurate focusing distance. Left: The sports finder. Right: The Aqua Snappy system includes the camera, accessory base, sports finder, topside close-up frame, U/W close-up rod, waterproof film cases, close-up lens and case and camera case.



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Take The Calypso CHALLENGE AND GET A CHANCE TO WIN \$5000

**TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY
BY BONNIE J. CARDONE**

Win \$5,000 just for trying on a BC? Well, that's the gist of the Calypso Challenge. All you have to do is visit a U.S. Divers Pro Line dealer before June 30, try on a Calypso BC jacket and fill out an entry form. This latter will be entered in a drawing and one lucky person will win \$5,000. The dive store salesperson and/or dealer who helped you try on the BC will share another \$5,000.

Is the product this promotion is trying to sell worth it? I think it is.

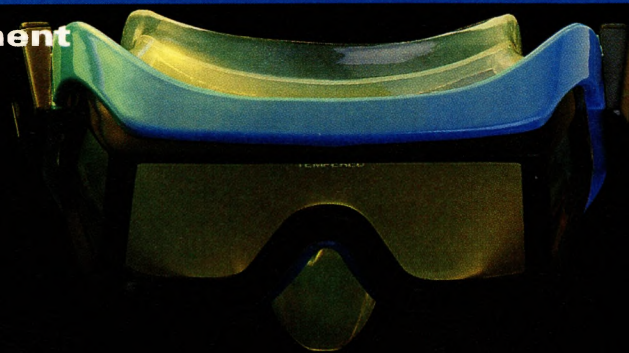
The Calypso is the latest version of the jacket BC. It provides flotation at the wearer's back, shoulders and waist: There are no flotation panels on the chest. This has several advantages: It allows drysuit wearers easy access to chest valves; it eliminates bulk; it provides freedom of arm movement. In place of the front panels there are straps, enclosed in stretchy sleeves that come in black, navy blue, yellow, royal blue or pink. Pull on the top D-rings to loosen the straps; on the bottom D-rings to tighten. Aside from these there is the Sea Band Velcro® closing cummerbund and two ny-

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lon webbing straps with quick release buckles. When you have adjusted these to fit you, the BC hugs your body. This streamlines the Calypso and it produces little drag underwater.

Of special note is the Sea Band. This can be as snug as you wish. Because it is depth compensating, it will not loosen and slip around underwater.

According to the literature, the Calypso is designed to put the weight of your scuba tank on your hips instead of your shoulders. This is because it has a special backpack built into it. Called the Alpine, it is one piece of thin, but sturdy lightweight plastic, shaped like an upside down T.

Along with the special features already mentioned, the Calypso has all the other things BC jacket wearers have come to expect—and more. There is an overpressure relief/manual dump valve on the right shoulder. The oral inflator hose also has a dump valve at the top, activated by pulling down on the hose. The low pressure inflator comes with the BC. Its large inflator button is made of plastic and can't corrode. Just a touch fills the BC with air.

The Calypso attaches to the tank by means of a nylon webbing strap, with a nonslip rubber cover and a special stain-

less steel/plastic buckle. USD BCs are among the few on the market that use a nylon webbing tank band that does not have to be wet (to prevent stretching) before it's put on the tank. There is a second nylon webbing strap with a plastic quick release buckle and a handle for carrying the tank.

Two large, Lycra-Spandex pockets are on either side of the BC. These are quick draining and stretchy. With its Velcro panels undone and unfolded, the pocket on the left side is half again as long as the one on the right. For an extra \$30 you can have a 25 gram CO₂ cartridge installed under this pocket for emergency flotation. Also under this pocket is a hose guide intended for your pressure gauge/console hose. This will keep this important instrument where you can find it easily. The Calypso pockets slant and can be used to store an octopus second stage.

The Calypso has a large plastic D-ring, for attaching accessories, on the bottom right. The outer bag is tough nylon, the inner bladder is polyurethane coated nylon. USD was the first to use this new type of inner bladder and it is resistant to punctures, mildew and ultraviolet light.

I took the Calypso with me on a two day trip aboard the charter dive boat,

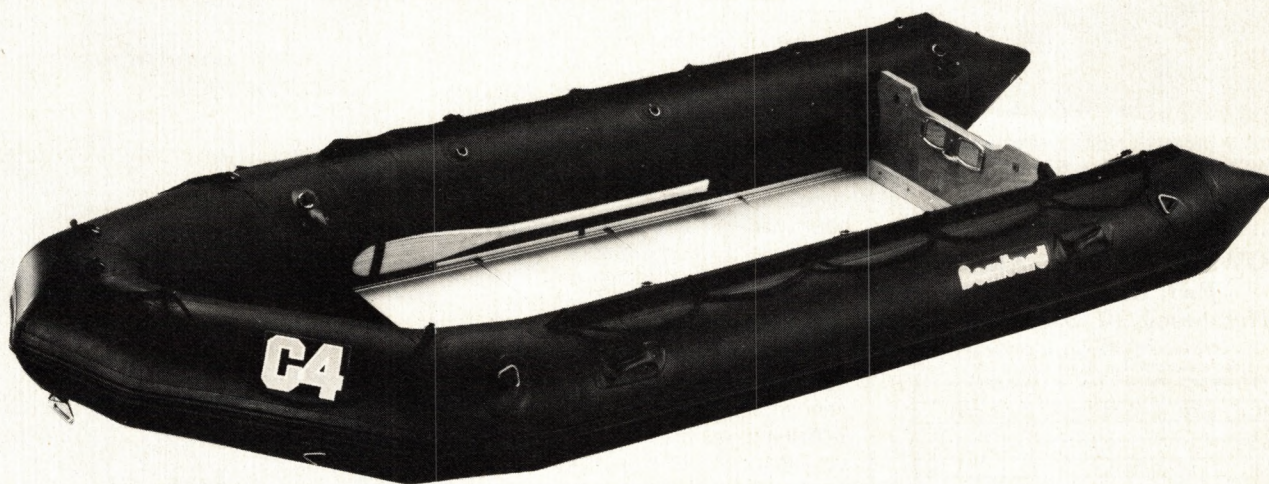
Charisma. I really liked its streamlined profile—the absence of bulky chest panels is a definite plus. It was comfortable both topside and underwater. The adjustments that custom fit it to me were quick and easy.

Maintenance requires nothing more than a thorough freshwater rinse, inside and out, when your diving day is over. And, if you have a CO₂ cartridge, examine it frequently, replacing it when it shows signs of corrosion.

USD covers the Calypso with both its Satisfaction Guarantee and its Limited Lifetime Warranty. The first one states that if the purchaser is not satisfied with the performance of the product he/she can return it within 30 days of purchase and it will be replaced with something of equal or similar value. The limited lifetime warranty states that defective or worn parts will be replaced for the lifetime of the original purchaser. These promises are good indications of the confidence US Divers has in its products.

The Calypso comes in black/gray and navy/silver. It is available in small, medium and large for \$429. Try one on now at your U.S. Divers Pro Line dealer. Don't forget, the \$5,000 Calypso Challenge sweepstakes end June 30. 🐙

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WRECK FACTS

(Continued from Page 16)

whistle plug intact and some fittings.

Great Lakes divers, particularly those around Lake Superior, might be interested in a free publication, *Superior Pursuit: Facts About the Greatest Great Lake*. The four-page bulletin, published as an information service by the Minnesota Sea Grant Program, tells about the lake's size, weather, water quality, fish life and other facts. Although it doesn't mention shipwrecks, the bulletin reveals statistics of interest to wreck divers. Deepest of the Great Lakes (1,333 feet), Superior drops to 700 feet along much of the North Shore after you've gone out about three miles. A clear-cut map shows the international border that crosses the lake and the boundary lines for Canada, Minnesota, Wisconsin and Michigan. To obtain a copy write: Sea Grant Extension Program, 208 Washburn Hall, University of Minnesota, Duluth, MN 55812.

I've discovered an excellent resource book, *Great Lakes Shipwrecks and Survivals* by William Ratigan. The 384 page paperback covers tragedies from Lakes Superior, Huron, Michigan, Erie and Ontario. An entire chapter is devoted to the wreck of the 729 foot ore carrier *Edmund Fitzgerald*. Other disasters include the liner *Eastland*, which capsized at her pier in the Chicago River; the freighter *Mataafa*, whose crew froze to death because they couldn't be reached by rescue boats from nearby Duluth; and the bitter Novembers of 1958 and 1966 when the *Bradley* and *Morrell* went down in Lake Michigan and Lake Huron. Many other dramatic tales of ships that fell victim to the five inland seas are told by Ratigan in his book, available from: William B. Eerdman's Publishing Company, 255 Jefferson Ave., S.E., Grand Rapids, MI 49503. The price is \$9.95 plus \$1.50 shipping.

Klein Associates, Salem, New Hampshire, has published a 98 page paperback training manual called *Sidescan Sonar Record Interpretation*. Prepared by Charles Mazel, manager of the technical services department, the manual evolved from training classes for users of Klein sidescan systems. Although sidescan sonar can be operated by relatively inexperienced personnel, the quality of data collected and accuracy of interpretation can be enhanced if the user has a basic understanding of the principles involved. These principles, application, design, underwater acoustics and record interpretation are covered in the manual, available from: Klein Associates, Klein Drive, Salem, NH 03079. The price is \$38 plus \$3 postage and handling.

Mrs. Elwyn E. Overshiner has turned over the remaining copies of her late husband's book, *Course 095 to Eternity*, to Helm Publishing Company. Mr. Overshiner-



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PENNSYLVANIA Dudas' Diving Duds 101 Bartram's Lane West Chester, Pa. 19382 215-436-0176 Evelyn Dudas	June 28, 29
NEW YORK Scuba Network 290 Atlantic Avenue Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201 718-802-0700 Steve D'Apuzzo	July 12, 13
FLORIDA Orbit Marine Sports 1683 So. State Road 7 No. Lauderdale, FL 33068 305-974-REEF Bob Good	Sept. 19, 20, 21

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er revealed the true story of one of the most incredible navigational blunders in naval history. In 1923 seven U.S. Navy destroyers crashed on the rocks off Point Pedernales, Southern California, killing 23 men while injuring many others. [See page 104, SDM April 1986.] Helm Publishing Company has some copies of the original book and is planning to publish a new edition soon. For information and prices, write to Helm Publishing Company, P.O. Box 1275, San Luis Obispo, California 93406.

Hugo Alvarez writes from Buenos Aires, Argentina, asking if readers know of any shipwrecks off the coast of his country. Hugo says: "Although my wife and I love Florida and the Bahamas, we can't always go diving there. Local waters, both the River Plate and the Atlantic Ocean, have low visibility and not the best diving conditions. Since we live in Buenos Aires, we are stuck with what we've got. But to put a little zest in our diving, we would like to discover and dive some wrecks in our area. We would appreciate any information divers might send." If you can help, write: Hugo Alvarez, Beruti 3621, Piso 7, DPT-B, Buenos Aires 1425, Argentina.

Safe diving to all. Be sure to include a stamped, self-addressed envelope when writing: Ellsworth Boyd, 1120 Bernoudy Rd., White Hall, MD 21161.

UNDERWATER STROBES

(Continued from Page 44)

cord without sending the strobe to a repair shop.

Regardless of what the salesperson says, any strobe—repeat, any strobe—can break down. Thus, the repair record of the manufacturer is important. Ask other photographers about their strobe repair experience.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

For an expanded list and description of 21 vital buying points for choosing an U/W strobe, see *Choosing and Using Underwater Strobes*. And, for a complete guide to using the Nikonos V and TTL strobes, see *The Nikonos Handbook*. Both books, by Jim and Cathy Church, are available at professional dive shops.

For information about specific strobes, write to the manufacturers or distributors: Akimbo, Inc. (Subatec strobes), 4437 Balboa Ave., Encino, CA 91316. Helix Aquafash 28 and other strobes), 310 S. Racine, Chicago, IL 60610. Ikelite Underwater Systems (Substrobes, etc. \$1 for catalogue), P.O. Box 88100, Indianapolis, IN 46208. Nikon, Inc. (SB strobes, Nikonos), 623 Stewart St., Garden City, NY 11530. Oceanic (Oceanic series strobes) 14275 Catalina St., San Leandro, CA 94577. Graflex/SubSea and Sea & Sea USA (strobes) 1030 W. 15th St., Riviera Beach, FL 33404.

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the ultimate in open front comfort with adjustable size option, then demand the Original Manta at your local Seatec dealer.



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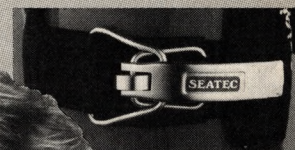
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SEATEC'S EXCLUSIVE SEABAND, the finest nylon tank band in use today. Heavy duty stainless steel cam has the longest lever of any band made. Features easy inside adjustment.



Aquacraft II of San Diego, California is now the U.S. distributor for Technisub products. This is a timely move as Technisub has recently developed several exciting new items. One of these is the NASA fin. In this case NASA stands for New Advanced Swimming Apparatus. This is an ambitious handle, but the fin does incorporate several interesting design innovations.

The NASA fin comes with a black foot pocket and a choice of three blades: translucent white, royal blue or black. The fin blades are made of a specially formulated, ultra-light plastic, designed to provide the optimal combination of stiffness, snap and torsional rigidity. The blade of the all black fin, however, has graphite and carbon fiber added for increased resiliency (snap), which results in increased propulsion with each kick. The extras in the blade material earn the black fin an additional name: Carboflex. This was the fin tested for this report, but all features except the blade material apply to all NASA fins.

In addition to a snappy material, the NASA blade has ribs running down its length on both sides to prevent it from twisting and to channel water over its surface at the most efficient angle.

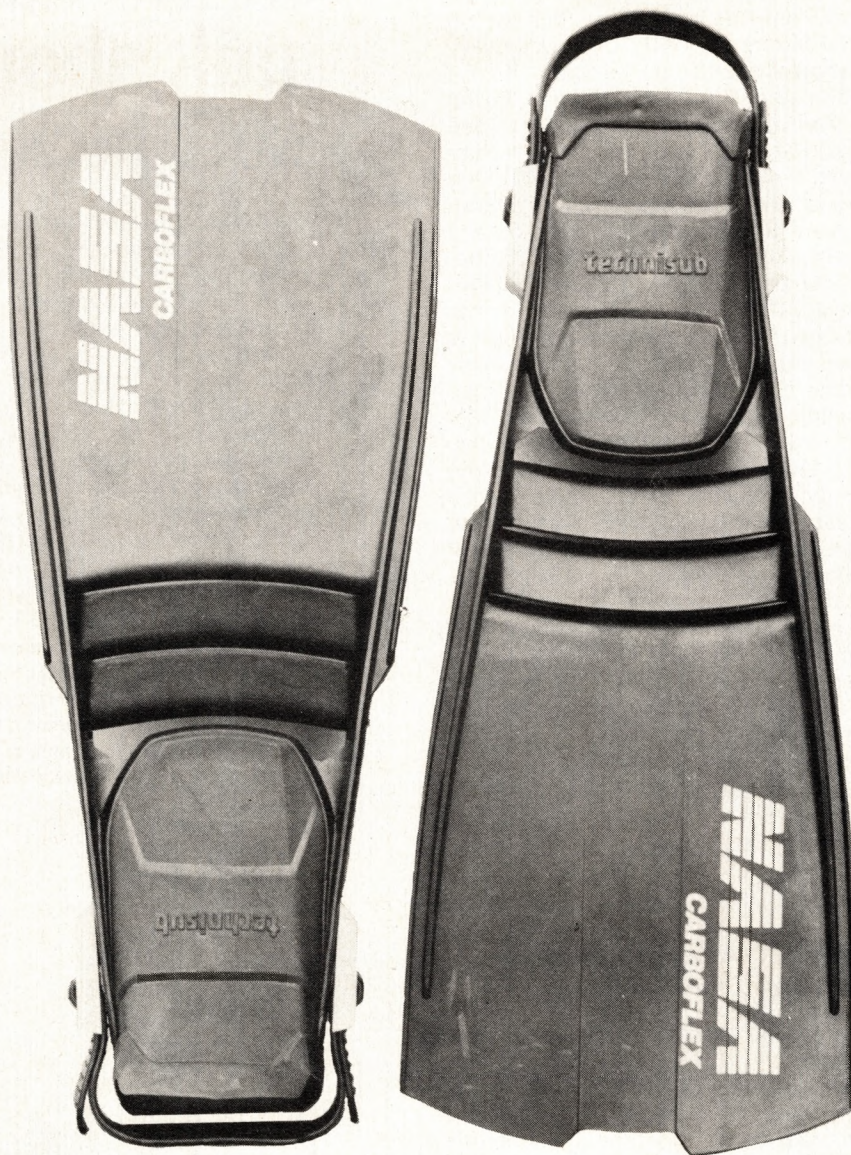
One of the most unique features of the NASA is the flexible venting system on the blade. These vents flex closed on the downkick to provide maximum surface area for maximum propulsion. On the upkick, however, they flex open to reduce resistance in the area of the blade where it is counterproductive.

The NASA foot pocket is made of soft, flexible rubber. The bond to the fin blade is guaranteed not to separate. The foot pocket has a large opening (top to bottom), where it contacts the ankle, and tapers down toward the toe where less vertical room is needed. It even has a flexible flap at the top of the opening so the edge won't dig into the ankle. Side to side, however, the toe area is wider than the opening—just like your foot and bootie. The shape of the foot pocket results in more comfort and less chance of the foot sliding around inside it.

The final design innovation of the NASA fin, and the one most divers will notice first, is the swivel buckle. Made of non-corrodible plastic, the fin buckles can be turned down to position the heel strap below the fin. This allows the diver to simply slip the foot in the pocket and *then* pull the strap easily up over the heel. He/she doesn't have to stretch the strap way back to allow the foot to angle into the pocket as with other fins.

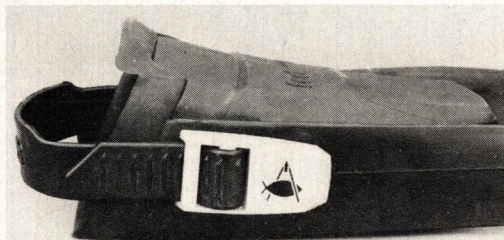
Not only do the buckles swivel, they allow one handed tightening of the heel strap while on the foot, underwater. This is accomplished just by pulling on the strap tip. To loosen the strap, simply swivel the buckle down. Then the strap can be pushed back through it easily.

I tested the NASA Carboflex fins during a beach dive, while wearing a drysuit and



Technisub NASA Fins

BY JIM WALKER

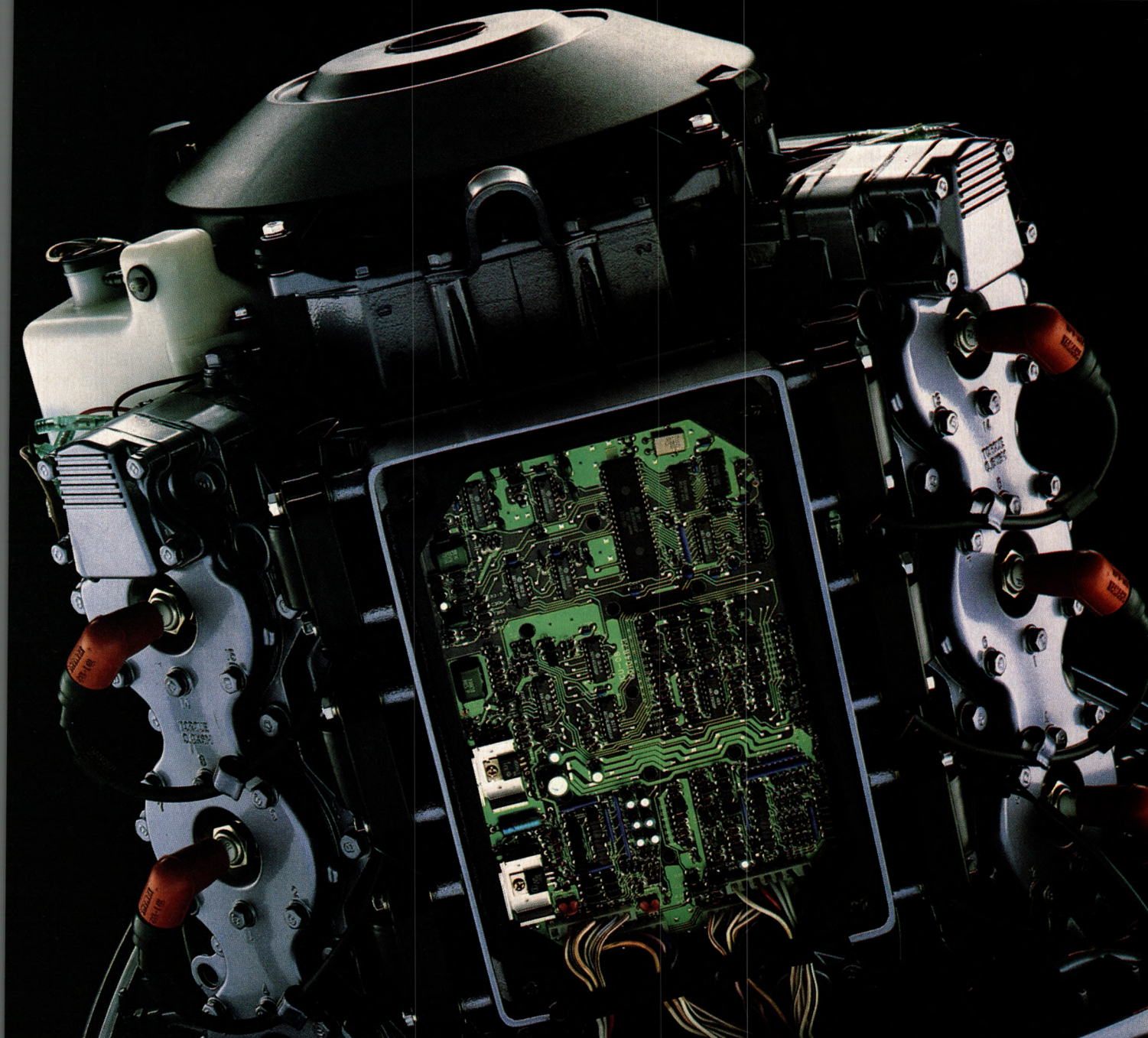


photos/Bonnie J. Cardone

The NASA fin features flexible vents, an anatomically shaped foot pocket and plastic buckles that can swivel to allow easy insertion of the foot into the pocket. The Carboflex has graphite and carbon added to the blade to give it extra snap.

extra weight as well as carrying underwater camera gear. Despite the resistance all this gear created in the water, the fins moved me forward well. They were a breeze to adjust, comfortable and stayed in position even when the drysuit's attached booties were full of air.

The NASA fin comes in medium and large. (Extra large fins will be available after June 1.) The models with blue or white blades are \$57.95. If you're a power kicker, try the Carboflex model for \$63.95. See the New Advanced Swimming Apparatus at your Aquacraft II dealer. >>>

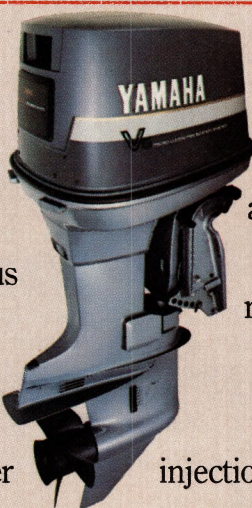


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photos/Bonnie J. Cardone

The Self-Don Neoprene Drysuit features a zipper that runs under the arms and around the lower back. This arrangement allows the wearer to zip the suit open or closed without assistance.

Henderson's Self-Don Neoprene Drysuit

BY JIM WALKER

It looked good. Even folded in the box, the sheen of the silver Lycra on the Henderson Self-Don Neoprene Drysuit caught my eye. Unfolded, and held up, it looked even better. It begged me to try it on. So I did. It went on easily and I zipped it closed myself. I wasn't disappointed in the fit, either. A stock men's medium, it fit like a custom order. There was just enough room for comfortable movement and drysuit underwear.

One of the major drawbacks of many drysuits is you need someone to zip and unzip them for you. I don't appreciate this kind of dependency. Yet, positioning the zipper where it is comfortable, easily reached and easily operated by the drysuit wearer has been a problem.

The Henderson Self-Don Neoprene Drysuit has worked this out with an under

the arms/across the lower back, double zipper arrangement. The inner zipper has low friction plastic teeth for extremely easy operation. This zipper is not waterproof. What it does is allow the wearer to pull the two halves of the drysuit seal close together for alignment. Once this inner zipper is closed and its tab tucked into the suit, the diver closes the outer, waterproof zipper. This arrangement not only reduces strain on the seal, it virtually eliminates the chance of closing the outer zipper over a piece of underwear or other foreign object that could cause a leak or jam. It also allows you to hang the suit neatly zipped together, while keeping the waterproof seal open, as recommended.

The Henderson Self-Don Neoprene Drysuit is made of sturdy, stretchy one-quarter inch Rubatex G231 foam neoprene. It can be purchased in either nylon two—in royal, navy, black or orange; or

Lycra outer/plush inner—in royal, navy, black, silver or red. All seams are sewn for strength and glued for waterproofing. The stitches don't penetrate entirely through the material and seams in critical stress areas have neoprene backing. Sewn/glued on knee pads are standard.

The suit comes with attached neoprene boots. These have molded soles with non-skid tread and are quite flexible, for comfort when inserted in a fin.

The wrist seals are one-quarter inch neoprene, skin inside. They are sewn and glued on and tapered for a watertight fit. The suit's neck seal is flexible one-eighth inch neoprene—skin outside, which is actually inside when you roll the top of the seal under. This not only provides a good seal (skin neoprene against your skin), it allows you to slip your head through the seal while only touching the nylon side. No more hair pulling!

The Self-Don Neoprene comes with an attached hood. It is three-sixteenths inch neoprene—flexible, yet warm.

A push button operated deflator is positioned on the left shoulder of the suit and there is a similarly operated low pressure inflation valve on the chest. A snap-on LP hose is included.

While the neoprene material of the Self-Don suit provides some thermal insulation, drysuit underwear is necessary in cold water. (Henderson's Thermal Wear retails for \$120.)

I tested the Self-Don Neoprene Drysuit during a February hot spell in Southern California. Self preservation demanded donning the suit quickly and hurrying into the water. It slipped on like a dream. In less than a minute from the time my feet were in the boots, I had the suit on and zipped closed. My head had slipped through the neck seal easily, and folding the seal over under the hood was also easy. In the water inflation and deflation were just a button push away. I stayed warm (wearing street clothes under the suit) for 30 minutes in 60°F water. The suit didn't pinch, bind or chafe and actually helped cushion the 34 pounds of hard lead weights I wore. (This was 40 percent more weight than I wear with a wetsuit, but our dive was shallow. Depending on the depth to which you intend to dive and the thickness of your undergarment, your percentage of extra weight will vary.) Except for one wet cuff and a little moisture at the collar, the ocean stayed out. The contoured cut of the suit didn't allow it to balloon out much (even at the feet) when inflated.

The Henderson Self-Don Neoprene Drysuit is definitely a class act. It is available in stock sizes (XS through XXL) and can be custom ordered. In nylon outer it retails for \$765. In Lycra it's \$855. Zip yourself into one at your Henderson dealer. I think you'll be surprised by the comfort. If you've got cold water dives planned, it's worth examining.

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**TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY
BY STEVE LUCAS**

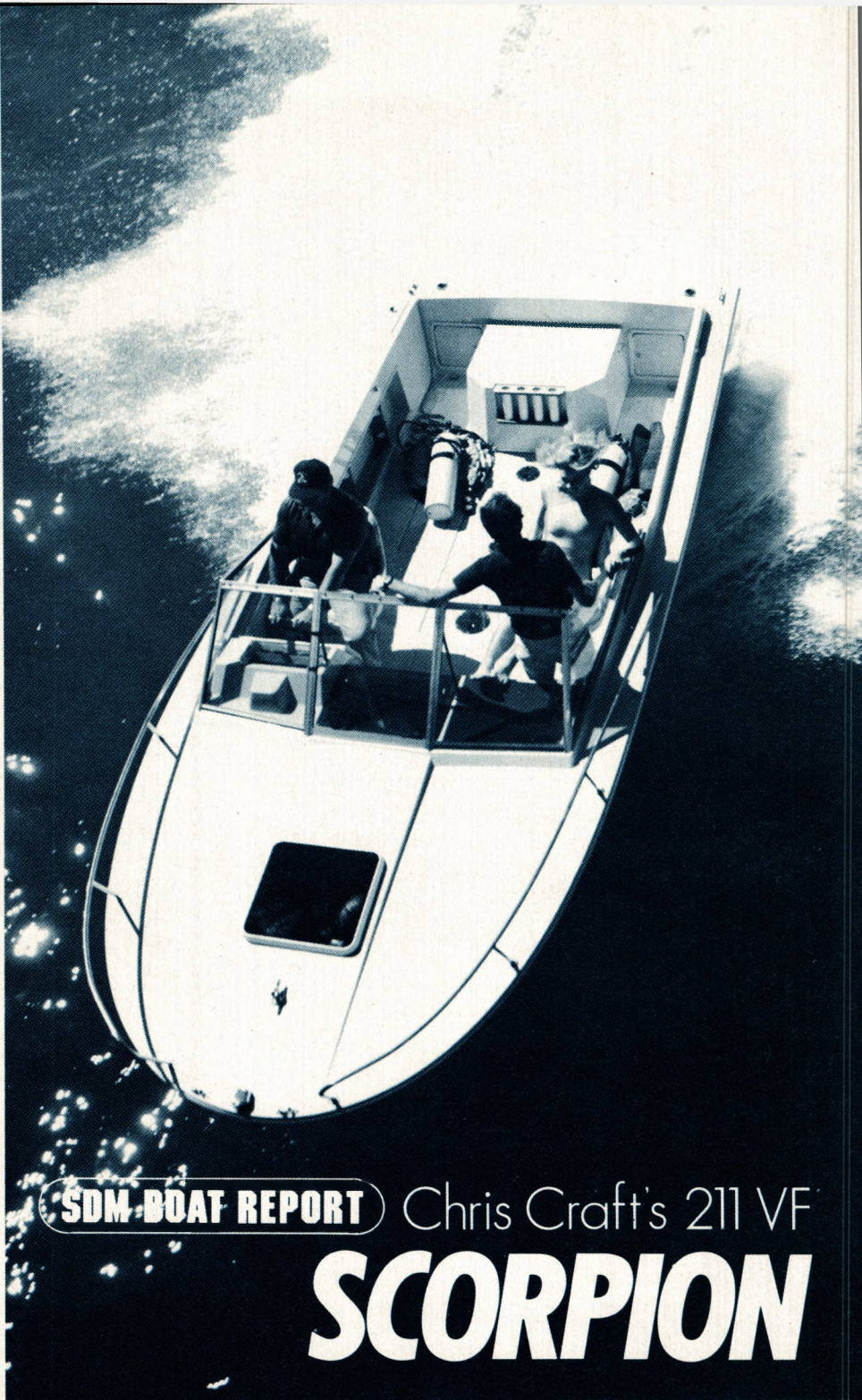
My dad loved the water. I guess I inherited that from him. Although the closest he ever came to owning a boat was an old 12 hp outboard he would take to the lake every weekend to put on a rented skiff, he always had friends with boats. My earliest recollection of being out on the water with him was in what then seemed to be an enormous wooden cabin cruiser. I don't really remember how big it was, I just remember it had a bathroom and a nice big ice box full of cold soda.

Although it was probably no longer than 30 feet, I recall it sure seemed luxurious. It had teak, cushioned seats, a polished wood dining table and several bunks below the bow deck. I remember thinking this was the kind of boat in which you could cruise around the world. But the main thing I remember about that boat is that it was a Chris Craft.

When SKIN DIVER decided to have me tell you about a Chris Craft my immediate thoughts were of sport cruisers, cabin cruisers and large yachts. Instead, the editors decided we should look at one of the company's smaller "yachts."

As soon as you step aboard any boat Chris Craft builds, such as the new 211 VF Scorpion, you find size has little to do with quality. The same people who build the big ones build the little ones. They use the same basic materials, the same skills, the same design innovations and, something more important—something Christopher Columbus Smith started building into every one of his boats more than 100 years ago—pride. That the name Chris Craft is going on the side of a boat seems very important to everyone from the fellow who lays the first layer of glass up to the chairman of the board.

A family oriented sport boat, the Scorpion brought back a lot of memories of the first Chris Craft I ever saw. Although smaller, it is still very nearly an entry level yacht. The cuddy cabin still makes it possible for a couple to take this boat out to a lake, some deserted beach, or an off-shore island for a weekend or a season of weekends. It has a spacious twin V-berth and ample storage. You and a friend can stay aboard this 21 footer overnight comfortably. Above the berths, recessed storage bays are large enough to hold plenty of personal gear or fishing equipment. An overhead hatch gives access to the foredeck and provides the fresh sea air that makes sleeping on a boat so restful. A portable marine toilet can be added to the cabin as an option. When you're not below deck, the lock-



SDM BOAT REPORT

Chris Craft's 211 VF

SCORPION

able cabin also provides a large storage space for bulky gear or anything you want to keep out of the elements.

The cockpit area has enough room for a half dozen divers and hundreds of pounds of gear. In addition to the cuddy cabin, storage is provided beneath the gunwales and in the deck. Chris Craft even has built-in fishing rod holders that are exactly the right size to hold medium to large spearguns or polespears. Fish

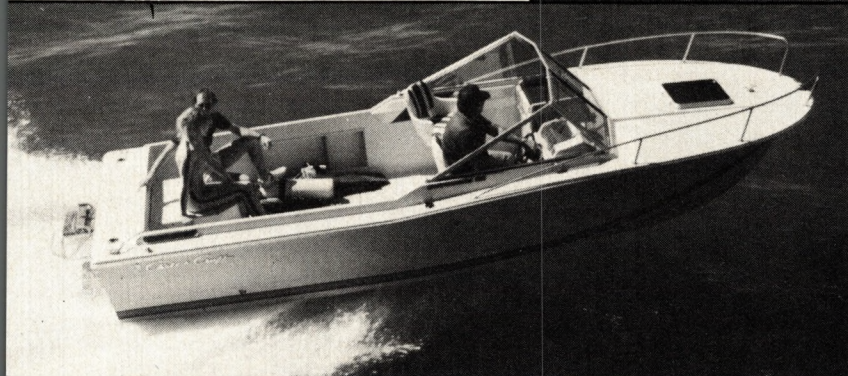
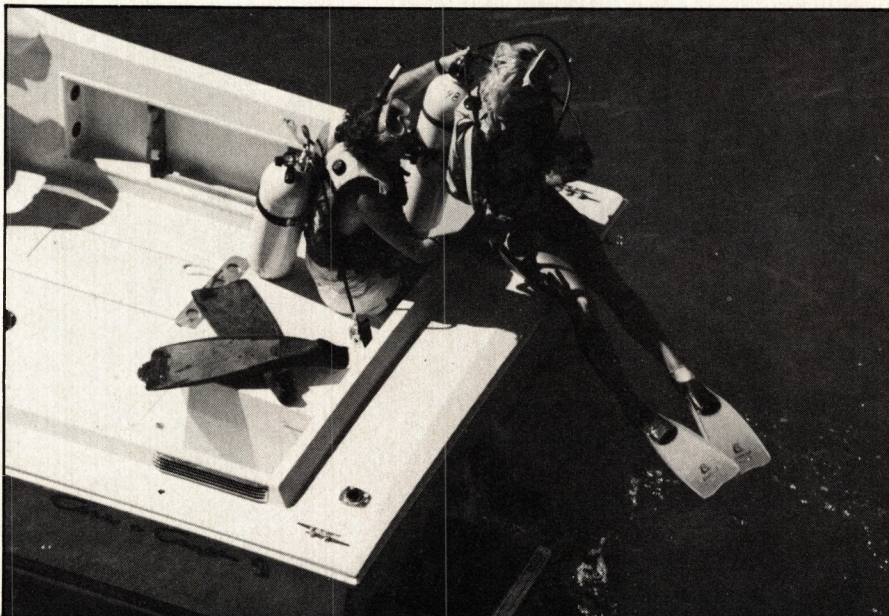
boxes to store your catch are both port and starboard. The 211's fiberglass inner liner helps keep maintenance and clean-up time to a minimum.

The cushioned seats remembered from my first Chris Craft are still there, too. Two swivel bucket pedestal seats are right behind the cabin and allow 360 degrees of visibility. In front of the starboard seat, an instrument console with liftable clear cover keeps salt spray off

the standard, full engine instrumentation.

With an overall length of 21 feet 3 inches and a beam of 8 feet, the fully fiberglass boat weighs almost 3,300 pounds. Add to that a load of divers and their gear and the deep-V hull design of the 211 is hard to get off the water. That's not to say it's hard to get the boat to plane—quite the contrary. With its recommended 230 hp Mercury sterndrive it virtually flies! With top speeds of 50 mph, it responds superbly. The 211 just doesn't want to jump off the water even in moderately rough seas; it likes to stick. If you

When powered by a 230 hp sterndrive, Chris Craft's 211 VF Scorpion can reach speeds of more than 50 mph. With an optional Step-On dive platform, the Scorpion makes an excellent dive boat, with plenty of open deck in the cockpit. The instrument console has a liftable, clear cover.



are more conscious of fuel efficiency and less interested in speed, a 190 hp Mercury is available that will produce speeds in the 40 mph plus range. Either way, the Scorpion can take you a long way from the dock with its 60 gallons of fuel. Should you prefer an outboard instead of sterndrive, the boat's sister 212 VF is also available.

The standard features of the Scorpion are impressive and make the base price of the boat very close to the total investment. The 211 comes equipped with automatic bilge pump, bilge blower, stainless steel bow rails, electric horn, cabin lights, navigational lights, power trim/tilt, soft top and a lot more.

One of the factory options every diver will want to add is the Step-On dive platform. Probably the best platform/ladder combination available, Chris Craft recommends this one because of its small size

and ease of use. Unlike almost all others, the drop ladder swings far enough away from the platform to give you proper center of gravity when climbing out of the water, even while wearing tanks.

For diving, fishing or just cruising, the Chris Craft line is difficult to beat. The Scorpion series can take you out to your favorite mid-America lake or just about anywhere offshore. My dad would have loved this boat and I'll bet you will, too.

List price for the 211 VF Scorpion with 230 Mercury sterndrive is \$20,495. With 190 Mercury sterndrive, it is \$18,995. The sister 212 VF lists for \$9,995, less outboard. For a color catalogue describing these and other Chris Craft boats see your local dealer or write: Murray/Chris Craft, P.O. Box 9450, Bradenton, FL 33506. In southeast Florida you can see the Scorpion at Dixie Marine, 21500 S. Dixie Highway, Miami. >

211 VF SCORPION

Length.....	21' 3"
Beam.....	8'
Weight.....	3,300 lbs.
Hull design.....	Deep-V
Engine.....	230 hp sterndrive (recommended) 190 hp sterndrive (optional)
Top speed.....	50 mph with big engine
Fuel Capacity.....	60 gal.
Price.....	\$20,495 with 230 hp engine \$18,995 with 190 hp engine

DIVE BOATS

MUNSON HAMMERHEAD

A Custom Made Aluminum Boat

BY DANIEL MONTGOMERY



The hull of each Munson boat is constructed of one-quarter inch welded marine aluminum plate, designed to take abuse. Available in lengths from 21 to 46 feet, the Hammerhead design offers tremendous flexibility. The wheelhouse, deck layout and hull accessories can be tailored to individual needs. Above: A 24 foot, inboard powered Hammerhead with davit and bow dive door/ladder looks ready to take on anything the elements dish out. Left: A 24 footer with outboards.

It's a jet-propelled silver bullet and it's headed right for me at an easy 35 knots. Surrounded by the requisite 100 pounds of cold water dive gear, I'm waiting for Bill Munson and his Hammerhead 26 dive boat for a sea trial on Puget Sound. "We'll just pick you up on the beach," he'd said on the phone, and I'd resigned myself to the prospect of juggling gear from beach to dinghy and dinghy to dive boat.

I was soon to realize this was an error in judgement brought on by a lifetime of dealing with "ordinary" boats. Not only was there no sign of a dinghy, there was no sign of the Hammerhead "heaving to" at all. She was heading straight for the rocky beach. Munson cut the Hamilton Jet propulsion system at precisely the right instant, and the Hammerhead crunched its way right up onto the gravel. Its bow-mounted dive door was dropped

feet from my tanks.

It was the beginning of an education—an eye-opener—about the advantages of aluminum boats.

Munson boats are aluminum: Period. Bill Munson will build with no other type of material. Each hull is constructed of one-quarter inch welded marine aluminum plate and designed to thrive on abuse that would literally destroy a hull of fiberglass or wood.

The Hammerhead design is the result of Munson's years as an Alaskan commercial salmon fisherman and boatbuilder. Nobody asks more from a boat than a commercial fisherman and Munson has set a standard in the fishing fleet for a stable, hard working platform that can handle the type of punishment Alaska waters dish out.

Available in lengths from 21 to 46 feet, the basic Hammerhead design offers a

tremendous amount of flexibility for the owner. Since each hull is built to specifications in the Edmonds, Washington plant, the wheelhouse, deck layout and hull accessories can be easily tailored to the application at hand. Our 26 footer, for example, can be configured for inboard, outboard, I/O or jet power. Dive doors can go bow or stern, port or starboard. The wheelhouse can be open or enclosed, centered or offset. Want benches for 20 divers and a row of tank racks? With welded aluminum, any modification can be incorporated into the basic hull design—unlike fiberglass vessels, which are constrained by the limits of the mold.

One particularly appealing 24 foot Hammerhead was designed with a completely open deck area, a dive door through the bow and a heavy duty davit for light salvage on the port side. With the dive door open, the deck is just inches

above the waterline and a sturdy, tubular aluminum dive ladder folds down for easy access: Perfect!

On the water, the jet-powered Hammerhead flies. In addition to speed and shallow draft for beaching, the Hamilton Jet offers a safety element by eliminating sharp props. If the owner prefers conventional power, drop-down prop guards can be added to prevent contact between divers and blades.

Not surprisingly, commercial divers, police departments and port authorities have discovered Munson boats and tailored them to their needs. A recent delivery to the Cleveland Police Department featured 1,000 watt underwater lights for nighttime search and rescue operations. Dive operators are also discovering the virtues of aluminum construction. A 24 foot Hammerhead is currently being built in the Edmonds yard for a Hawaiian operator. Because of aluminum's high degree of thermal conductivity, the boat will assume the same temperature as the water it is in—making it a cooler vessel for tropi-

cal destinations.

Remembering my dive boat etiquette, I carefully lowered my gear to the bottom of the Hammerhead, taking special care with the weightbelt and tanks. This was ridiculous. I might have been able to damage the diamond plate deck, but I would have needed a sledgehammer and a good half hour.

"With zero maintenance and no paint, this boat will last about 50 years if it is left in saltwater 100 percent of time," Munson says. "One of my skiffs fell from a seaplane on its way to Ketchikan. They just circled around and picked it up. There was no damage."

At the dive site, this silver bullet was worth its weight in gold. She barely twitched as divers passed through the door and the self-bailing deck kept everything dry. With her design capabilities, handling a group of 200 pound divers is a piece of cake for the Hammerhead.

Munson is pleased with the attention his boats are drawing from serious divers. "When a police department has the

ability to pick any boat in the country as a dive vessel and they choose a Munson Hammerhead, you've got to figure you're doing something right," he says.

The Hammerhead is a masterpiece of form and function. A V-bottom is combined with a deep forefoot and wide chines for the ability to handle any water condition with maximum performance. Choose from a square, round or pointed bow configuration—again, the choice is yours based on the end use of the vessel. She can operate as a straight workboat or be dressed to kill as a high performance yacht. One 34 foot version was recently delivered with twin 300 horsepower 454 Chevrolet gas engines and surface piercing drives. The result was a sleek, white, high-tech sport yacht with a top end speed in excess of 40 mph.

With 13 sizes available and basic hulls starting at \$11,550, there is a Hammerhead for everybody. For complete details on the Hammerhead, contact Munson Boats, 150 West Dayton, Edmonds, WA 98020; or call (206) 776-8222. 



The Hammerhead design is the result of Munson's years as an Alaskan commercial fisherman and boatbuilder. Top: Riding high out of the water, a 32 foot Hammerhead with Hamilton Jet propulsion streaks across the surface. While retaining the rugged reliability of a workboat, the 36 footer above has been designed as a sleek white sport yacht. Powered by twin 300 horsepower Chevrolet gas engines with surface piercing drives, the yacht can reach speeds in excess of 40 mph.

MARINE JET ENGINES

Marine jet propulsion systems have been around for quite awhile and offer advantages for dive boat operators.

The most obvious, of course, is the elimination of propellers. The jet system is mounted inboard near the stern and draws water through a duct in the hull. The water is then driven at high speed through the system and discharged through a nozzle directly aft.

A pair of deflectors behind the nozzle control the direction of the jet of water, creating a powerful steering thrust. Another deflector can reverse the flow for running astern. This deflector can also be activated at high speed for an incredibly powerful braking system.

In addition to eliminating propellers, the jet system also draws very little water, allowing the vessel to operate in shallow areas or on top of reefs.

Imagine what it would be like to be the first person to fly a floating capsule into an underwater Grand Canyon, observing everything above, below and around you.

This is essentially what UCSB scientist Bruce Robison and a team of marine researchers did in August 1985—they explored the vast Monterey Canyon off Northern California in a submersible that has been likened to an H.G. Wells glass-bubbled time machine.

The *Deep Rover* submersible was developed by undersea pioneer Graham Hawkes of Deep Ocean Technology in Oakland. It was leased to Robison and his team of scientists from Can Dive, a Canadian offshore diving company.

Deep Rover dives to 1,000 meters (more than 3,000 feet) and is revolution-

UNDERSEA SCIENCE

GOES HIGH-TECH

Deep Rover Dives
Monterey Canyon

BY HILLARY HAUSER

ary among submersibles of its type because it is not tethered to the surface. That means the pilot inside can go just about anywhere he or she wants to.

Exploring the Monterey Canyon with Robison was UCSB researcher Edith Widder, who studied bioluminescence in deep water marine animals. Jose Torres, a physiologist at the University of South Florida, studied the respiration of deep-sea animals and Richard Harbison and Larry Madin of Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution studied gelatinous zooplankton—salps and jellyfish.

Robison, a research professor of oceanography at UCSB and an expert on deep water fishes, studied these and other forms of sea life. He said the scientists restricted their dives to 600 meters (about 2,300 feet)—the depth to which their backup system could dive.

Robison said the *Deep Rover* enabled the scientists to observe things that had never been seen before.

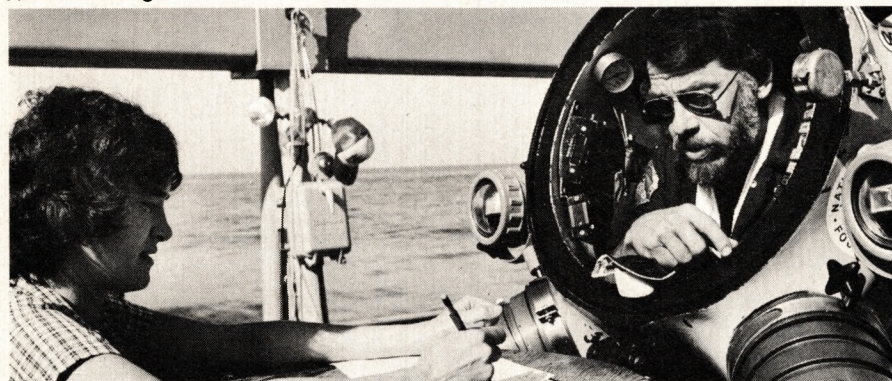
Monterey Canyon is a particularly interesting area for exploration, he said, because the canyon comes "right up to the beach at Moss Landing," making it a deep water connection to open water.

"We had access to deeper-living animals than we ordinarily could work on," Robison said. "This is a diverse, complex community and a step upward in understanding deep water ecology."

The canyon, Robison said, is "huge," explored only in geological surveys that have mapped sediments and configurations in parts of it.

(Continued on Page 91)

Alice Alldredge and Dr. Bruce Robison topside between tests of the *Wasp* in 1982



photo/Jason Bleibtreu

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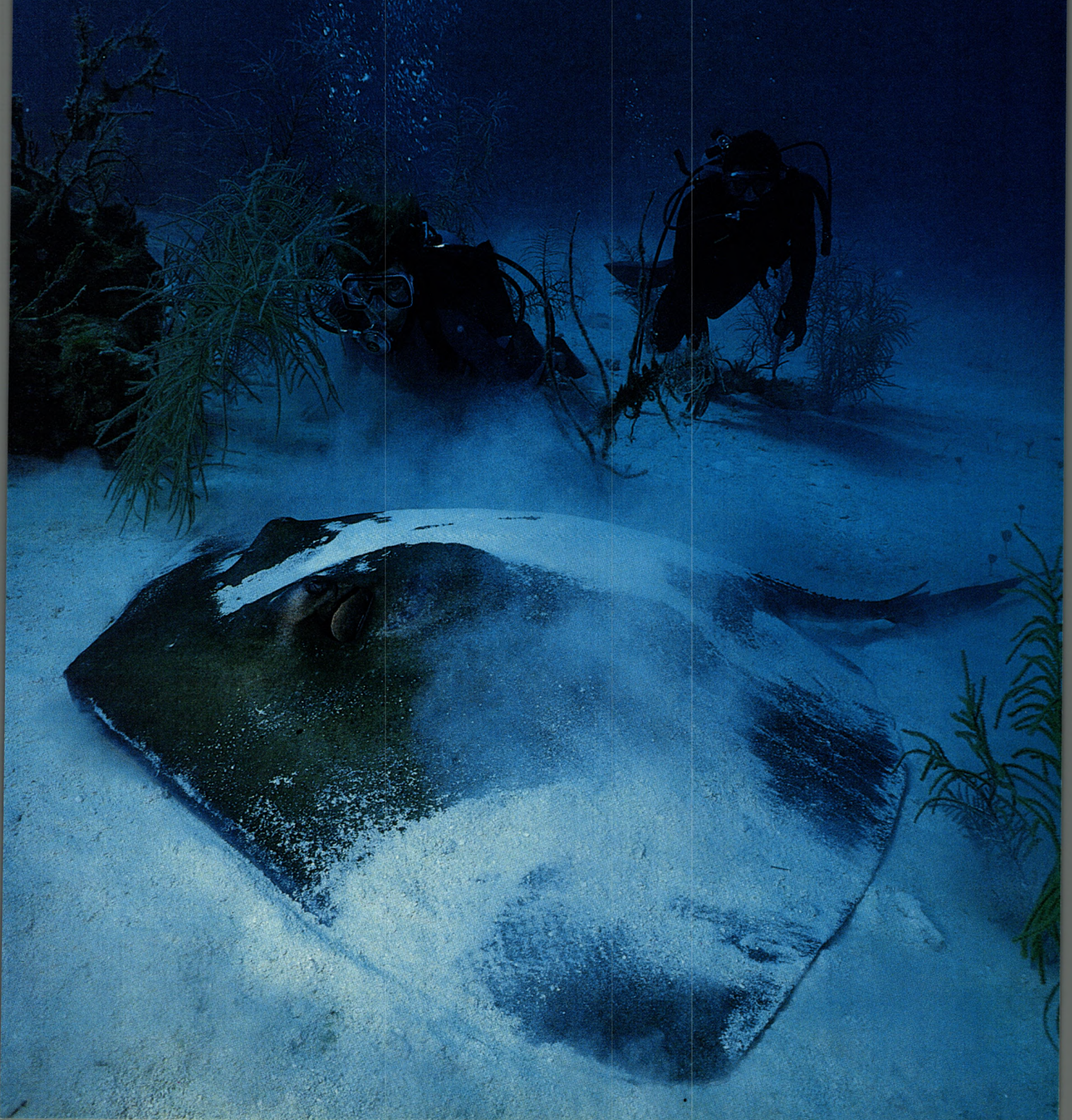
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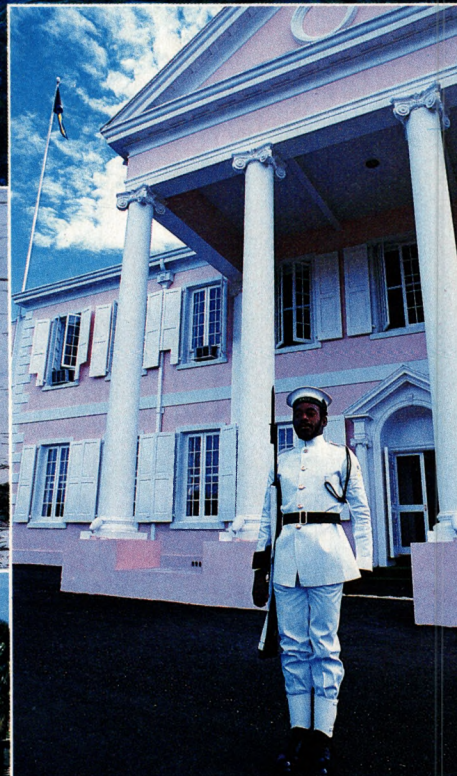
Bahamas

SDM DIVE/TRAVEL GUIDE



Bahamas

Islands Beyond The Stream



The varied islands in the Bahamas offer distinctly different vacation opportunities. Top: Jef Fox of the Romora Bay Club and Caroline Gannon cruise with a large grouper at The Plateau, Harbour Island. Clockwise from left: The pool and landscaped grounds of the Holiday Inn, Grand Bahama. A windsurfer makes the most of an afternoon breeze off Exuma. A snorkeler takes some time out for sun and relaxation on the white sand beach. A sentry in a crisp white uniform guards the government building, Nassau, New Providence Is.

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY STEPHEN FRINK

With more than 700 islands and 2,000 cays and rock formations scattered over 100,000 square miles of rich, clear tropical ocean, the Bahamas defy easy categorization. Culture, customs, architecture, tourist facilities, underwater attractions and even weather patterns may vary from one island to the next. There may be a cohesive feeling of kinship, but the Bahamas is also a collection of distinctly different vacation destinations.

As near as 50 miles off the coast of Florida, the Bahamas chain arcs to the southeast over 750 miles. Accessible by commercial and private aircraft, private boats, live-aboard dive boats and cruise ships, the Bahamas are as appropriate for a weekend jaunt as a week-long stay. Short travel time and inexpensive flights are a considerable advantage of the Bahamas' proximity to the U.S.

Many major U.S. cities such as Boston, New York, Chicago, St. Louis and Dallas feature direct flights to Nassau and Freeport, with connections to the Family Islands as well. Atlanta, Orlando, Tampa, West Palm Beach, Fort Lauderdale and Miami serve as the primary U.S. gateways to the islands with scheduled commercial and charter flights to not only Freeport and Nassau, but many of the Family Islands on a daily basis. Bahamas Sports Information at (800) 32-SPORT, your travel agent, or the island dive operator you will be visiting are the best references for recommendations regarding the specifics of air travel.

For those wishing to tour the Bahamas by boat, there are several options. Cruise ships are commonly seen around Nassau and Freeport. While some watersports packages are available to shipboard guests, the best of the Bahamas dive experiences are unavailable to those limited by the relatively rigid itineraries of the cruise ship. A live-aboard dive vessel is a much more viable alternative and the Bahamas features the finest fleet of such craft in this hemisphere. The live-aboard advantages include more dives possible per day; having dive and camera gear readily at hand; greater range and accessibility to remote and potentially more exciting reefs. Perhaps the most significant advantage to the Bahamas live-aboard fleet is the knowledgeable and competent crews operating these vessels. Not only is it a comfort to realize that personal safety is ensured by qualified seamen, but with an underwater resource as vast and relatively unexplored as the Bahamas, the experience of these operators is essential to maximize the diving potential.

The final option for boat travel to the Bahamas is the private yacht. These islands are considered among the world's finest cruising grounds for both power and sailboats. This is not only because of

their superb fishing and diving, magnificent sand beaches, crystalline water, friendly natives and ample sunshine and warm temperatures, but also because multi-day open ocean voyages are unnecessary. An average boat with a planing hull can reach Bimini from Fort Lauderdale in two hours or less and inter-Bahamas cruising can be conducted as day trips. There are thousands of secluded anchorages, as well as scores of fully equipped marinas for provisioning, repairs or just a touch of civilization.

Regardless of how you reach the Bahamas, it is necessary to clear customs at a Bahamas port of entry. The paperwork required for entry into the Bahamas by a U.S. or Canadian citizen is very minimal, but it should absolutely be taken care of before ever leaving the mainland. Passports are, of course, acceptable, as are birth certificates and voter's registrations. A driver's license is *not* acceptable. Bahamas ports of entry are: Abacos—Green Turtle Cay, Marsh Harbour, Sandy Point, Walker's Cay; Andros—Congo Town, Fresh Creek, Mangrove Cay, Nicholl's Town, San Andros; Berry Islands—Chub Cay, Great Harbour Cay; Bimini—Alice Town; Cat Cay—Cat Cay Club; Eleuthera—Cape Eleuthera, Governor's Harbour, Harbour Island, Hatchet Bay, Rock Sound; Exuma—George Town, Grand Bahama—Freeport, West End; Inagua—Mathew Town; New Providence—Nassau; Ragged Island—Duncan Town; San Salvador—Cockburn Town.

As with any foreign country, guns, ammunition, explosives and illegal recreational drugs will create a problem with the customs man.

The currency of the Bahamas is on parity with the U.S. dollar and Bahamian and American dollars are generally used interchangeably. Taxi drivers and merchants may or may not be able to return change in U.S. currency, but most hotels are able to exchange money. Hotels, large restaurants and many dive operations also accept traveler's checks and major credit cards.

Electricity on most of the Bahamas islands is 120 volts at 60 cycles, the standard in North America. Therefore, converters are not required. There may be an occasional surge or fluctuation on some of the smaller islands where power is provided by private generators. A simple inquiry at the dive shop or hotel front desk can usually allay any concerns.

The Tropic of Cancer slices through Long Island and south of George Town in the Exumas, so technically, part of the Bahamas is tropical and part is subtropical. But, the distinction between the northern and southern Bahamas is not as important as the difference between winter and summer, the Bahamas' only true seasons. In the winter the general daytime high will be around 78°F and the nighttime low around 68°F. Occasional cool spells may make a sweater or light jacket appropriate to carry along. For the

most part, winter in the Bahamas is a balmy, sunny escape from the cold and snow beleaguering most of the U.S. and Canada. The cooler temperatures, of course, are reflected in the water temperature, which may range from 68 to 76°F over the season. A three-sixteenths inch wetsuit is adequate for any Bahamas winter dive day and for most days, a shorty or one-eighth inch wetsuit is comfortable. During the winter months winds can make on-shore activities ideally comfortable, but occasionally bumpy out on the ocean. Some of the dive operations feature sites on both the windward and leeward shores of their islands, which allows them to escape prevailing winds. Winter is the high season in terms of general tourism. The myriad recreational activities of the Bahamas such as windsurfing, waterskiing, fishing, beachcombing, horseback riding, shell collecting, golf, tennis, boating, sunbathing and basic relaxation augment the diver's dry time.

Summertime in the Bahamas means flat, calm seas and water temperatures ranging from 76°F to the high 80s. The air temperatures run about the same and a wetsuit is absolutely unnecessary for thermal protection. A light wetsuit or Lycra suit, however, might be advisable to protect against stings and abrasion. Underwater visibility throughout the Bahamas is among the best in the world, winter or summer. But, while the average visibility during the winter might be in the 100 foot range, during the summer it can approach 200 feet.

Dress in the Bahamas is generally casual and in keeping with the warm climate. Shorts, a T-shirt and deck shoes are adequate for most daily occasions, although a windbreaker or sweater might be welcome in the winter months. For evening wear, slacks and a sport shirt for men and slacks or skirt and a blouse for women are usually sufficient. The exception is Freeport or Nassau where the travel itinerary might include discos or night clubs, gambling or a cabaret show. In this case a sport coat or dress might be advisable, but in general, attire is casual.

Diving throughout the Bahamas is both exciting and varied. The topside attractions of each of the Bahamas islands are likewise diverse. In the following section we will look at Nassau, Freeport and the Family Islands.

NEW PROVIDENCE

Nassau is often considered synonymous with New Providence, but of course New Providence is the island and Nassau the capital city and seat of government for the Bahamas. Just as Nassau is much more than a government center with its highrise resort hotels, straw market and duty free shopping, cruise ship port, cabarets and casinos, beaches and watersports; New Providence is much more than just Nassau. There are several high quality golf courses throughout the island and last January the \$300,000 PGA Ba-

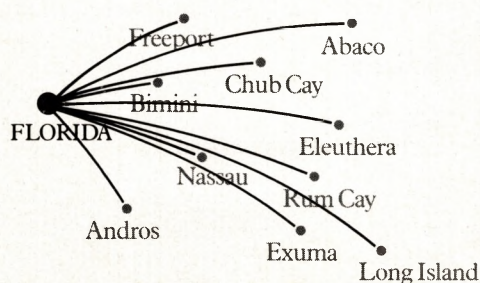
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Area	Dive Operator										REEF	WALL	NIGHT	DRIFT	CAVE	WRECK	BLUEHOLE	FISHING	SAILING	TENNIS	GOLF	WINDSURFING	SNORKELING
ABACO	Brendal's Dive Shop, Ltd. Dive Abaco, Ltd. Island Marine Dive Shop Treasure Cay Divers Walker's Cay Dive Centre	NAUI	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
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ANDROS	Andros Undersea Adventures Small Hope Bay Lodge	NAUI	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
BERRY ISLANDS	Chub Cay Undersea Adventures	NAUI/PADI	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
BIMINI	Bimini Undersea Adventures	NAUI	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
CAT ISLAND	Hawk's Nest Club	PADI	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
CROOKED ISLAND	Pittstown Point Landings		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
ELEUTHERA	Cotton Bay Club Romora Bay Club Spanish Wells Dive Center Valentine's Dive Center	PADI	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
		PADI	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
		PADI	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
		SSI	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
EXUMA	Exuma Aquatics, Ltd. Exuma Divers	PADI/SSI	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
LONG ISLAND	Stella Maris Inn	PADI	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
RUM CAY	Rum Cay Club	PADI	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
SAN SALVADOR	Island Water Sports, Ltd. Riding Rock Inn	PADI	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
NEW PROVIDENCE	Bahama Divers, Ltd. Coral Harbour Divers New Providence Divers, Ltd. Smuggler's Rest Resort Sun Divers, Ltd.	PADI	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
		PADI	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
		PADI	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
		PADI	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
		PADI	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
GRAND BAHAMA	UNEXSO West End Diving Centre	NAUI/PADI	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
		NAUI/PADI	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

For more information on the many diving experiences available in The Bahamas call 1-800-32-SPORT.

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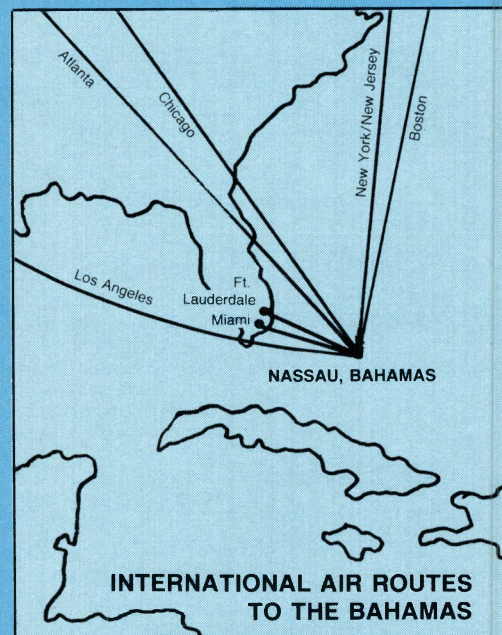
Bahamas

hamas Golf Classic was held on Paradise Island. The annual Bahamas International Windsurfing Regatta was held this year at the Nassau Beach Hotel with prizes in excess of \$50,000.

Several of the dive operations, including BAHAMA DIVERS LTD., NASSAU DIVE SUPPLY/DIVER'S HAVEN and SUN DIVERS LTD., are in Nassau and serve guests from the large resort hotels there and on Paradise Island. There are a number of shallow to medium depth reefs on the north side of the island, plus a couple of interesting wrecks near Nassau that are on the standard dive itinerary for these operators. **Green Cay Reef** sits in 35 feet of water and is typified by staghorn and elkhorn coral formations. **Paradise Island Caves** offers a little deeper dive in 50 to 55 feet of water and features undercut coral ledges populated by a wide variety of reef tropicals. Probably the most popular dive on the north side of the island is the wreck of the **Mahoney**. A large steel vessel, apparently a freighter, the *Mahoney's* two separate sections provide two separate dives. The site known as the *Mahoney* sits in 30 feet of water and is very productive for the

fishwatcher or underwater photographer. Tame groupers and moray eels are the stars of the U/W show, but as with so many shipwrecks, the general fish life is abundant. The **Deep Mahoney** lies in 60 feet of water and offers greater relief and an even denser colony of resident fish.

The south side of the island is the lee side and is easily accessible to NEW PROVIDENCE DIVERS at the SOUTH



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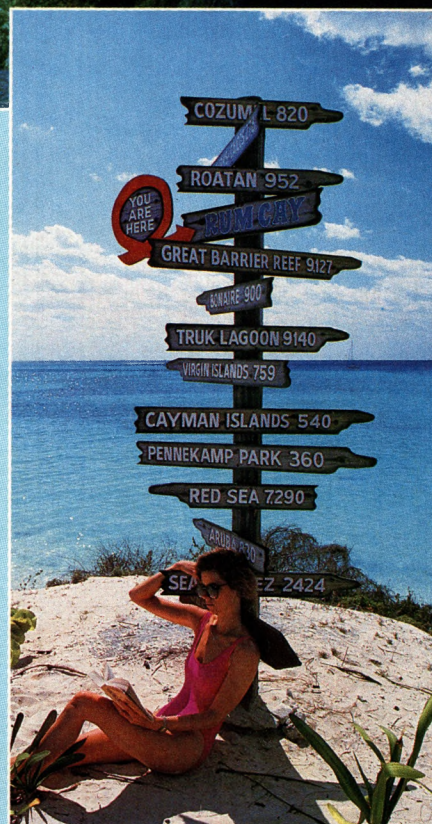
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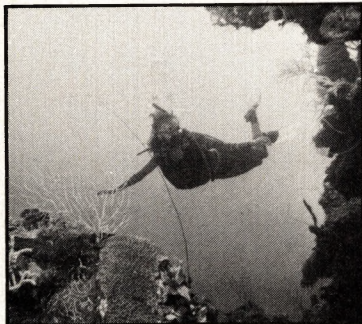


Above: Sunset at an Andros beach. Andros is the largest island in the Bahamas chain and offers a 142 mile long barrier reef close to shore. It features hard corals in shallow water, seafans at medium depths and a drop-off that begins at 75 feet. Right: Unloading luggage, Bahamas Air. The Bahamas can be reached easily by air or water.



Top: The *Comberbach*, Long Island. This ship was sunk intentionally to create a dive site. It sits upright in 90 feet of water. Above: A diver's signpost provides a backrest for a Rum Cay visitor. Rum Cay diving features fascinating underwater reef structures and rich fish life. Lee conditions exist in winter and cooling breezes are present in summer.

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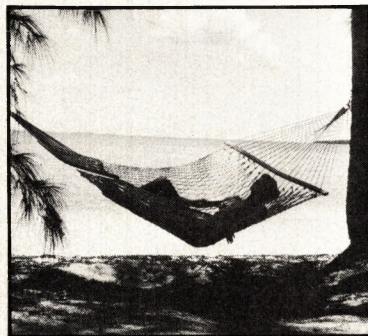


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Bahamas

OCEAN BEACH HOTEL and SMUGGLER'S REST and CORAL HARBOUR DIVERS at the LYFORD CAY CLUB. This is the area in which Hollywood has chosen to stage many of its biggest productions including *Thunderball*, *Never Say Never Again*, *Splash* and *Cocoon*, as well as numerous Flipper episodes and the TV movie *Wet Gold*. The same attributes that make this area attractive to Hollywood make it attractive to sport divers: The weather is predictably calm; the waters are predictably clear; the dive sites are just short boat rides from shore; there is great variety; and there is good topside support. This topside support can be in the form of the rambling 120 room South Ocean Beach Hotel, or a smaller, more intimate setting such as the Smuggler's Rest, with 11 efficiency units. Or guests can stay in the Nassau, Paradise Island

or Cable Beach sections of New Providence and ride daily shuttle buses to the boat docks.

The Stadium is typical of many of the wall dives, beginning at 45 feet and dropping fairly vertically to 120 feet, at which point it becomes very vertical. The wall dives are along the Tongue of the Ocean, which brings the clear blue waters and open ocean pelagic life in contact with the reef face. The Stadium is so named because it is a large sand bowl surrounded by "bleachers" of high profile corals. Schooling fish, such as jack and grunt, populate the coral along the wall's edge, while the wall face is adorned by multi-hued sponges and gorgonians. **Sand Chute** is somewhat similar except for a sand ramp dropping from 45 to 90 feet where it meets the wall. Along the wall face are purple tube sponges, brilliant orange elephant ear sponges and good populations of angelfish and grouper. As you traverse the wall to the east you will encounter the ghostly **Shuder's Shipwreck**, first appearing as a monochro-



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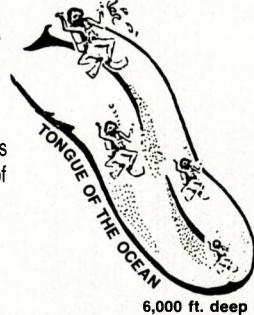
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matic apparition in the distance. It is a 64 foot wooden fish trawler sunk intentionally as a dive site in January of 1985. Its strange positioning, upright on the bottom with the bow protruding over the wall, makes for dramatic photographs.

The Runway is one of the recently discovered New Providence dive sites, and one of the most photographically productive ones. The New Providence Divers team of Steve McDiarmid, John Shuder and Caleb Goodman introduced us to The Runway. We found it to be an absolutely fascinating 40 foot dive because of the large number of incredibly approachable southern stingrays resting in the sand. There were more rays, and they were easier to approach and photograph, at The Runway than at any other Caribbean dive site I've visited. Another atypical behavior was that when the rays would finally become agitated enough to flee, they would swim only a few yards away. The silt from this activity quickly terminates the photo activities, but it is a very memorable dive.

Goulding Cay is one of the prettiest shallow elkhorn gardens around. You've seen it as a backdrop in *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea* and *Splash*, but that doesn't prepare you for the tranquil vista of acres of intact elkhorn corals surrounding a circular sand spit where the dive boats anchor.

Probably the most popular New Providence dive site is the wreck of the **Tears of Allah**. It gained its fame in *Never Say Never Again*. Sitting upright in 45 feet of water, it's an interesting dive for small groups. The framework for the airplane from *Thunderball* is near enough to tour in the same dive and is worthwhile for the profuse marine life, colorful soft corals and the sponges encrusting the structure.

Stuart Cove of Coral Harbour Divers lists **Tunnel Wall** as one of his favorite dive sites. Named for the honeycomb system of tunnels, crevices and caverns lacing its sheer vertical face, Tunnel Wall begins as shallow as 35 feet and plummets to more than 6,000. Giant groupers, snappers, angelfish and lobster are but a few of the many species populating the coral heads and wall recesses. The wide angle photographic potential for this dive is inspiring.

GRAND BAHAMA

Grand Bahama, in general, and Freeport specifically, has developed into one of the Bahamas' premier vacation destinations. It is blessed with tropical beauty and proximity to the United States. Intentionally developed with an eye to the tourist trade, Grand Bahama lies at approximately the same latitude as Palm Beach, Florida, just 60 miles to the east. The Gulf Stream to the west is responsible for warming currents and blue waters, while the Great Bahama Bank to the east and the extensive system of mangroves serve as a prolific fish hatchery.

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Bahamas

The island's major population center, Freeport, is a flourishing tourist haven with flights coming and going several times daily on a variety of commercial and charter air carriers.

There are more than 2,000 hotel rooms available in Freeport alone, with another massive complex at the West End development, JACK TAR VILLAGE. Most hotels are large resorts equipped with freshwater swimming pools, elevators, air-conditioning, restaurants, several lounges and a variety of watersports packages. The Princess Casino and the newly reopened Lucayan Beach Hotel also offer gambling and cabaret shows.

The secret of Freeport's popularity with the dive community is probably attributable to three factors. The first is the efficiency and expertise of the UNDERWATER EXPLORERS SOCIETY (UNEXSO). For more than 22 years UNEXSO has been serving divers' needs in the Freeport area. Today it has evolved into an impressive complex integrating a sophisticated instructional program including a unique, 18 foot deep training tank; a modern retail facility; guest dive gear storage; a popular restaurant and bar;

compressors and rental dive gear; and three custom dive boats.

The second reason is the quality of the diving off Freeport. There are deep reefs, a wall (although the wall starts rather deep, 110 feet), medium depth reefs and a beautifully vibrant shallow reef. However, the most famous dive in Freeport is not a reef at all, but a wreck. **Theo's Wreck** is a 230 foot steel freighter intentionally sunk as a diving attraction. It sits on its side just at the edge of the ledge in 100 feet of water and baitfish, snapper, a school of resident horse-eye jacks, several barracuda and turtles have become frequent visitors.

The typical day of diving will include an early deep dive in 60 to 90 feet of water or on Theo's Wreck. These are usually one tank dives and since the sites are only 15-20 minutes from UNEXSO, travel time is not significant. There will be a mid-morning dive scheduled at one of the shallow reefs in 10 to 25 feet of water. The elkhorn corals and yellow seafans are especially beautifully represented in the Freeport shallow reefs and it is an excellent area to photograph snorkelers. The afternoon dive is usually to a reef in 30 to 60 feet of water, but occasionally a cavern dive is substituted upon request. Night dives are also very much a part of the UNEXSO diving packages.

The third reason for the success of Freeport as a dive destination lies in the

variety of other recreational activities available après dive or for non-diving companions. There is great duty free shopping; the International Bazaar with its colorful straw market; magnificent beaches with areas of privacy and other areas with a variety of watersports such as parasailing and windsurfing; fine and diverse dining; superior accommodations; interesting night life and gambling.

Once beyond the modern conveniences and resort aspects of Freeport, Grand Bahama has more of an out-island flavor. There are native restaurants, quaint "conch" architecture, empty expanses of beach, native fishing fleets and lots of undeveloped land. The drive from Freeport to the Jack Tar Village at the West End is particularly scenic with mounds of conch shells lining the road. These countless thousands of shells are piled in mute testimony to the importance of this gastronomic staple to the Bahamian lifestyle and also to the bounty of the vast Bahama Banks.

UNEXSO has recently taken over the dive operation at the Jack Tar Village, a 400 room hotel along the waterfront at the West End. It is styled in the Club Med concept of one price for all recreational activities including snorkeling, boardsailing, sailing and other watersports. The scuba diving programs are in place. In addition to the established sites, the dive-masters are constantly exploring and finding exciting new sites. This is another one of those areas that would be fascinating to explore in greater detail.

At the East End of Grand Bahama is the DEEP WATER CAY CLUB, a nine room resort that has been in operation for more than 25 years, primarily as a bonefishing lodge. Now John and Mary Brooks have instituted a comprehensive diving program utilizing a 27 foot dive boat and trips limited to 10 divers. Besides the ample open ocean dives, John and Mary are exceptionally qualified cave and cavern divers. They explore the inland and ocean blue holes with regularity. The ambience is rustic and the potential for adventure is high.

THE FAMILY ISLANDS

Of the 700 islands in the Bahamas, 21 are inhabited. Beyond New Providence and Grand Bahama there are the 19 Family Islands. Of these, nine islands or groups of islands actively cater to traveling divers. We will consider these in geographic succession from north to south.

THE ABACOS

Lying in a 130 mile elbow-shaped arc in the northeast corner of the Bahamas, the Abacos are bordered by the Atlantic Ocean and the Great Bahama Bank. Great Abaco represents the largest land mass and most of the islands are fringed with sparkling sand beaches. The outer cays and reef enclose a protected cruising ground that has long been a favorite

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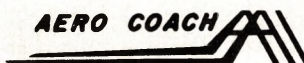
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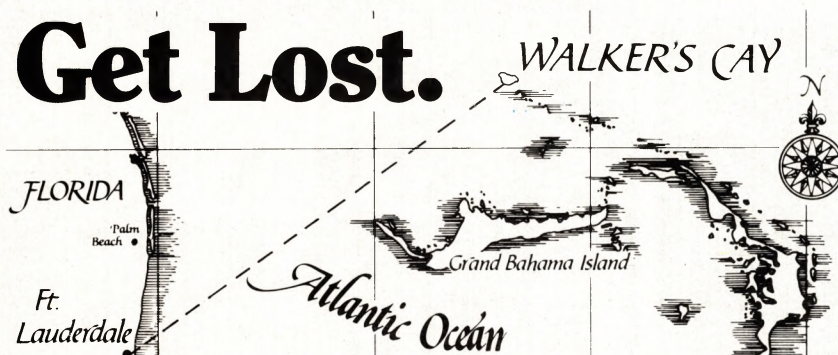
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Bahamas

of yachtsmen, fishermen and divers. The Abacos are, of course, accessible by boat and by air at Marsh Harbour, Treasure Cay and Walker's Cay.

WALKER'S CAY

Walker's Cay is a private 100 acre island that has been developed as a resort catering to fishing, boating and diving. The marina is the hub of activity in the summer with big time fishing tournaments where contestants battle with blue and white marlin, sailfish, wahoo, tuna and dolphin, as well as grouper, snapper and bonefish. There are two swimming pools, tennis courts, 62 double rooms, three villas and the deluxe Harbor House retreat. A new addition to Walker's Cay is the Aqualife Mariculture project. This is the largest tropical marine fish farm in the world with a new building half the size of a football field, 200 brood tanks, 62 larval tanks and more than 200 grow out tanks. Visitors to Walker's Cay are welcome to tour the facility.

Despite Aqualife's effectiveness, it can't compete with the coral reefs just 15 minutes offshore and therein lies the magic of Walker's Cay. Most dives range from 15 to 50 feet in depth, so there is ample bottom time and plenty of available light. Examples include the **Old Wreck** at 15 feet with bits of wreckage from an old ship spread out across the bottom, and a host of macro residents including plume worms, cleaner shrimp, anemones and crabs as well as numerous reef tropicals.

Nick's Reef is an extensive cavern and tunnel system with black coral to be found in depths of only 30 feet. There are seasonal swarms of glass minnows in the caverns and, as a result, lots of groupers and snappers to prey on the baitfish.

Jeanette's Reef is a favorite with many. It has a garden eel community, rich fish life, lobster and high profile brain and star corals; all in only 30 feet of water.

TREASURE CAY

Treasure Cay is approximately 30 miles north of Marsh Harbour. It is the home of TREASURE CAY BEACH HOTEL. A beautiful marina is complemented by deluxe cruising yachts as testimony to the nautical nature of this development. Accommodations include hotel rooms, marina view rooms and suites, and villas. There are two freshwater swimming pools, several restaurants and even cable color television. The beach is on the lee side of the island and looks exactly the way a magnificent tropical beach should. And, it also has complete water-sports activities, a beachside grill and restaurant, and lounge chairs.

Jim and Carol Beights operate TREAS-

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URE CAY DIVERS and are doing a fine job of providing courteous, reliable services to the resort's guests. The boats include a 31 foot Oceanmaster powered by a diesel engine. There is also a new deep-V, 30 foot Island Hopper, powered by a 3208 Caterpillar engine that allows the vessel a top speed of 22 knots. There are new aluminum tanks, new BC jackets and new regulators.

Dive packages include air fare, but note they may be purchased with or without meals. The villas at Treasure Cay include cooking facilities and there is a surprisingly complete grocery store in the small shopping plaza for those who wish to dine in their rooms.

Probably the most requested dive near Treasure Cay is the **Chub Rocks Wreck**. Formerly erroneously labeled the wreck of the *San Jacinto* and supposedly run aground in 1865 while eluding Union gunboats during the Civil War, the wreck is of a much later vintage. The more probable history places it as a steam-powered freighter run aground in 1932 and blown apart as a hazard to navigation. Whatever the causes for the ship's demise, it has become a glorious artificial reef.

The **Catacombs** is a close second place for favorite Treasure Cay dive sites. It has caverns percolated with sunlight in depths no greater than 30 feet. The effect is almost cathedral-like. When glass min-

nnows are present, it can be spectacular.

Marsh Harbour is the center of population for Great Abaco and, in fact, the third largest city in the Bahamas. There are three dive operations serving the general area: DIVE ABACO, operated by long-time Bahamas dive veteran Skeet LaChance out of the Marsh Harbour Marina; DAVE GALE'S ISLAND MARINE in Hopetown; and a dive operation at the ELBOW CAY BEACH INN. Hopetown is a short ferryboat ride from Marsh Harbour. It is picturesque and noted for its red and white candy-striped lighthouse. The Elbow Cay Club is just south of Hopetown.

Representative samples of the diving to be found in the Marsh Harbour area include primarily shallow to medium depth reefs such as **Grouper Alley**. In 40 feet of water, it has high mounds of coral and swim-through canyons populated by tame groupers, angelfish, chubs, eels and an occasional shark. **Tunnels** is another grouper feeding station in 20 feet of water. It has caves filled with copper sweepers and seasonal accumulations of glass minnows. The **Train Wreck** is a pair of narrow gauge locomotives, some huge spoked wheels and miscellaneous wreckage scattered over several hundred square yards of bottom in 15 feet of water. It dates from the early 1900s. The wreck of the **Adirondack** is in 10 to 25 feet of water with mostly just ribs and

scattered rubble still visible. It is of interest because of its 12 cannons.

BIMINI

Bimini lies closer to Florida (it's only 42 miles from Miami) than any other Bahamas island. While access is easy via Chalk's seaplanes; charter or commercial aircraft; or boat, a different world awaits on the eastern edge of the Gulf Stream. Diving here has become almost synonymous with NEAL WATSON'S BIMINI UNDERSEA ADVENTURES. Featuring dive/lodging packages with both BROWN'S HOTEL and the BIG GAME CLUB, Neal's operation features a dock-side dive shop with compressors and rental gear, a small retail facility, helpful and qualified divemasters and two 40 foot deep-V diesel dive boats.

Even from the air the deep blue of the Gulf Stream is evident. Once you experience the strikingly crisp clarity of Bimini's waters, Miami's metropolis 42 miles to the west is forgotten. Here there is a spectacular wall dive done as a controlled drift to a depth of 120 feet: A kaleidoscope of giant sponges, gorgonians, black coral, pelagic fish such as amberjack, eagle rays and tuna all merge in an effortless glide at three to five knots. There is the huge cement hulled derelict, the **Sapona**, sitting upright in only 15 feet of water. Its sides are perforated with

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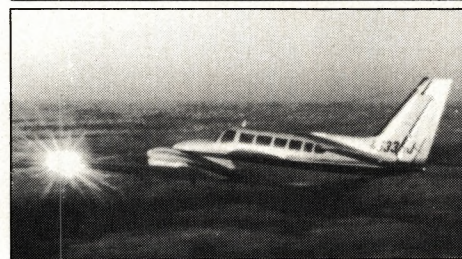
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Bahamas

huge holes admitting light and divers alike to the ship's hold, now alive with schools of grunts and snappers, pufferfish, angelfish, soldierfish and sergeant majors. Subjects for macro photographs abound both within and on the exterior of the ship and the huge propeller suggests yet another wide angle shot. There are scores of dives close to Bimini. Some, like **Rainbow Reef**, are set in shallow water with tremendous schools of grunts and resident nurse sharks. Some, like **Hawksbill Reef**, are in 45-55 feet with high profile coral heads rising to within 15 feet of the surface and literally hundreds of lobster. Farther to the south, **Victory Rocks** is a reef configuration three to four miles long in depths ranging from 40 to 90 feet. With sparkling visibility the norm and high concentrations of fish throughout the coral canyons, Victory Reef is worth the hour boat ride from the Bimini Undersea Adventures dock.

Because it is so close to the Miami area, Bimini is a popular weekend getaway. However, those who wish to stay longer will never be bored by the quality and variety of diving.

ANDROS

Lying only 20 miles west of Nassau, Andros is the largest island of the Bahamas chain. Of special appeal to the diving enthusiast is the 142 mile long barrier reef averaging just one mile offshore. The reef in general features hard corals in the shallow areas, especially elkhorn, staghorn, star and brain corals. It gradually slopes to an intermediate section in 60 to 90 feet of water with dense coral clusters punctuated by seafans and gorgonians, as well as barrel and azure vase sponges. On the outside edge of the barrier reef there is a vertical drop-off, in some areas as shallow as 75 feet, but much deeper in other areas. The awe-inspiring abyss of the Tongue of the Ocean is just offshore and eagle rays, jacks, tuna, sea turtles and other pelagics frequently cruise the wall.

There are just two dive operations to serve this mass of predominantly unexplored reef; **SMALL HOPE BAY LODGE** near the settlement of Fresh Creek and **ANDROS UNDERSEA ADVENTURES** near Nicholl's Town. These two settlements are distant enough that the dive sites do not overlap and it is unlikely that another boat will ever intrude, a welcome change from some of the more heavily traveled dive destinations.

The **ANDROS BEACH HOTEL** is home to Andros Undersea Adventures, and both are capably operated by Neal Watson. Since Neal's dive operations include Andros, Bimini and Chub Cay, it is appropriate to reflect on the similarities among

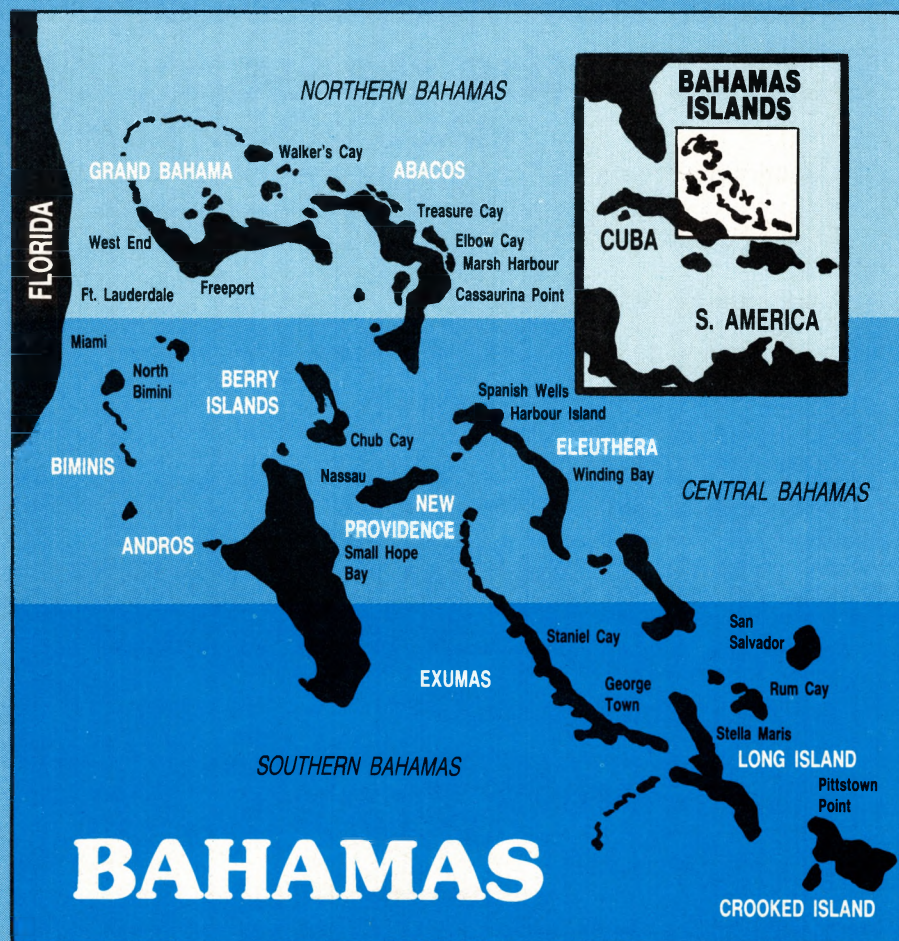
each of the operations. Of course the destinations and host hotels are substantially different, but many elements are also the same. Neal will be personally involved to a great extent and the dive staff will be qualified boat handlers and scuba instructors, adept at dealing with people in a resort setting. The boats will have deep-V hulls with diesel power and be set up with dive platforms, tank racks, VHF radios and safety equipment. The dive itineraries will be structured to maximize the amount of available time in the water, generally at least three dives per day and scheduled night dives. The dive destination will be thoroughly researched by the divemasters so the best diving is presented. The compressors will be in good repair and have back-ups, and the rental equipment will be modern.

The Andros Beach Hotel sits on four acres of landscaped ground with 400 feet of sandy beach. There are 10 rooms equipped with double beds and three cottages with two double beds. Additionally, there are several villas available. There is a freshwater swimming pool, a dive center and a grocery store nearby for snacks or food for villa residents.

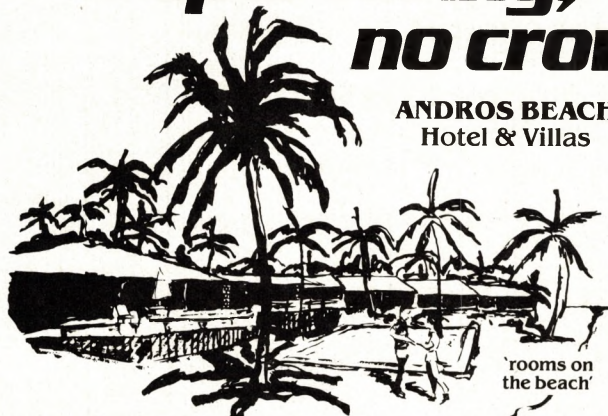
Small Hope Bay has been in business more than 26 years, making it the oldest dive operation in the Bahamas. Operated by Dick and Rosie Birch, along with an ever-growing loyal extended family,

Small Hope Bay exudes a special cordiality. It has more of an intimate flavor than many of the larger resorts and more than 70 percent of its business is either repeat or word-of-mouth referrals. There are 20 cottages spread out around a main lodge that also serves as living room/dining room. A hot tub sits beside an expansive sandy beach, and board-sailers, Sunfish and a complete dive center comprise the watersports activities. The dive boats are outboard powered flattops and the dive sites are near and often spectacular. It was here that world famous underwater photographer David Doubilet took his first black and white underwater photographs. He was a skinny kid of 13, pumping tanks and doing odd jobs, all the time dreaming of marine encounters and pictures he could take on his day off.

Among my favorite dives in the Andros area is the wreck of the **Potamac**. It was run aground in shallow water in 1952 and split into two sections 200 yards apart by the sea. Both sections are exposed at low tide, but the stern is deeper and better sheltered from surge. The most memorable features are the huge boilers, the resident nurse sharks, the unique clusters of coral encrusting the sides of the ship near the bow, the large schools of brown chromis and the proliferation of parrotfish. For wide angle photography,



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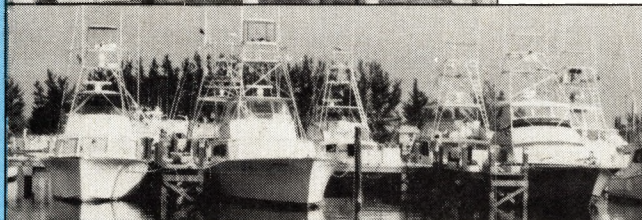
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Bahamas

this wreck is extremely appealing. The **Crater** is an ocean blue hole perforated by caverns off the side and coral canyons and caverns nearby. The **Barge** dive is best noted for its pair of resident green moray eels and the **Valley of the Sponges** is a 120 foot drift dive during tidal shifts. Much of the barrier reef is very shallow and protected from surge, so not only are there challenging scuba dives, but beginning divers and snorkelers can be accommodated as well.

BERRY ISLANDS

The Berry Islands lie 19 miles to the east of Bimini and for the most part consist of undeveloped islands, cays and sandbars. Perched at the edge of the Tongue of the Ocean, however, and famous among sportfishermen for more than 25 years, Chub Cay and the CHUB CAY CLUB are now bearing the fascinated scrutiny of sport divers.

The resort facilities include a self-generated power and desalination plant; a massive marina with dockside dive shop; 15 double occupancy rooms; a freshwater swimming pool; photo center with classroom and E-6 processing machine; camera rentals; and both scuba and photo instruction available. CHUB CAY UNDERSEA ADVENTURES is the third of Neal Watson's Family Island dive centers. Like the others, it is able to provide visiting divers with a variety of exciting dive options.

The **Chub Cay Wall** starts in only 80 feet of water and features startling clarity, black coral, barracuda, spider crabs and eagle rays as an almost daily occurrence. The **Oasis** is being groomed as a fish feeding station and already there are large Nassau and tiger groupers awaiting the daily fare.

Canyons and Caves is probably my favorite mid-reef area. In only 20 to 40 feet of water, with sand flats on the shallow side and a mini-wall to seaward, is a fabulous natural aquarium with angelfish, triggerfish, barracuda, Atlantic spadefish, grouper, eels, various species of baitfish and an occasional nurse shark. Snorkelers will generally visit the area known as **Mama Rhoda Rock** and wonder at the forest of untrampled elkhorn, the schools of grunts and the yellow trumpetfish.

ELEUTHERA

Forty miles to the east of Nassau and south of Abaco, Eleuthera is shaped like a boomerang and 100 miles long. There are four dive operators, three of which are clustered at the north end of the islands, and WINDING BAY RESORT in southern Eleuthera. Winding Bay also features sailing, fishing, windsurfing and tennis. While not all Winding Bay guests

come specifically for the diving, there are several fine shallow to medium depth reefs and a complete dive facility with a 28 foot dive boat to accommodate those who do.

Guests destined for SPANISH WELLS, ROMORA BAY CLUB or VALENTINE'S YACHT CLUB AND INN will fly into the North Eleuthera airport and connect by taxi and ferryboat with the intended resort. Harbour Island is a lush, scenic island with a picturesque 17th century settlement called Dunmore Town still flour-

ishing today. Harbour Island was first colonized by the Eleutherian Adventurers (Eleuthera derives from the Greek for freedom) seeking to escape religious persecution. They were shipwrecked on the Devil's Backbone, part of the reef system that provides so much tourist activity today. They brought their sense of New England architecture with them. The colonial flavor of the edifices is still apparent today, although the shocking pinks, yellows and turquoises were never envisioned at Plymouth Rock. There are

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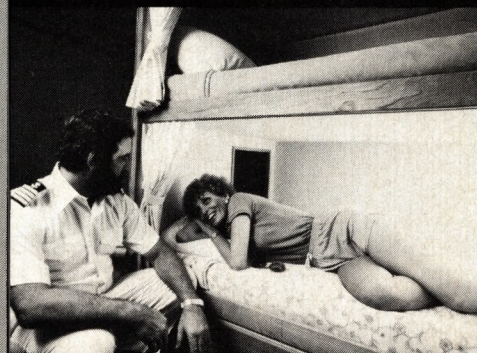
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Bahamas

eight hotels on Harbour Island, mostly 20 to 30 room establishments. Of these, both the Romora Bay Club and Valentine's have attracted a loyal repeat following among the dive community.

The Romora Bay Club consists of 30 double units scattered over a nine acre estate. At one time it was a citrus plantation and there are still orange trees on the hillsides. Accommodations take the form of cottages and two bedroom suites, with meals and drinks taken in the main house. There is a bar and shaded veranda overlooking the ocean, especially appropriate for watching sunsets over a goombay smash and a bowl of complimentary popcorn. Both Romora Bay and Valentine's function more as resorts—featuring watersports and dive packages—as compared to dive resorts. The emphasis is on a complete vacation ambiance appropriate for honeymooners, general relaxation and, of course, divers. The dive groups are small and there is a definite personalized aspect to the service. For example, dive operations manager Jef Fox at Romora Bay limits the passenger load on his two 30 foot diesel vessels to only 10 divers. He then works with them so they are aware of the variety of available dives and seeks to tailor the itinerary to their desires. Divers tend to make two boat dives per day and only an occasional night dive. That leaves plenty of time to explore Dunmore Town and the island; try out the windsurfers or 28 foot daysailer; relax in the hot tub; or just lounge in the hammocks.

Valentine's Yacht Club and Inn is on the water's edge. Since my visit just a year ago, there is an impressive new marina and dockside lounge. Since last May all 23 rooms have been renovated by the new owner. But, the charm of the property remains. There is a freshwater swimming pool, spa, tennis courts, restaurant

and lounge, and a high quality dive operation dockside.

VALENTINE'S DIVE CENTER operates a stable and dry 36 foot Thompson trawler, powered by a diesel engine, as their primary dive boat. Set up with freshwater shower and head, stereo, tank racks and dive platform, the *Double Trouble* is comfortable both underway and at anchor. According to dive manager Jeff Parrish, groups of up to 20 can be handled comfortably but the average charter is more like 12 divers. In addition, there is a 26 foot gasoline powered boat suitable for six to eight divers. The dive center is very active with both resort course and full scuba certifications. It has a fairly complete retail area with a wide selection of T-shirts, resort wear, camera rentals, scuba gear rental, magazines and postcards, sunglasses, dive knives, etc.

Some of the top Harbour Island dive sites include the **Plateau**, a sandy bottom in 80 feet of water with immense high profile spurs of hard corals rising to within 30 feet of the surface. Schools of grunts, jacks, goatfish, chubs and, occasionally a turtle, share this prolific reef with angelfish and relatively tame groupers, both Nassau and tiger. The Plateau is a huge area and we dove it several times without feeling any sense of repetition. The **Arch** is part of a larger reef complex known as **Miller's Reef** and takes the form of a slope from 60 to 120 feet with a massive coral archway at 110 feet. Eagle rays are sometimes seen in underwater acrobatics through the archway. Chromis, schools of jack, an occasional bull shark and, in the summer, millions of baitfish, are also evident. Shallow dives such as the **Sea Gardens** with its forest of elkhorn in 10 to 35 feet of water and the **White Hole**, a sand amphitheater surrounded by elkhorn, pillar, star, brain and staghorn corals in 35 to 55 feet, are traditional Harbour Island favorites.

Spanish Wells is the home of two resorts operating under the same management, the HARBOUR CLUB and the SPANISH WELLS BEACH RESORT. Both

cater to the traveling diver and the scuba facilities and boats are shared by each. Spanish Wells consists of 22 hotel rooms and seven cottages, a restaurant and lounge, dive shop, darkroom facility and classroom, all built alongside a powder white sand beach lined with casuarina pines. The Harbour Club features 13 hotel rooms and four one bedroom apartments, as well as a restaurant and two bars. The dive boats are two 34 foot flat-tops and a 22 foot Aquasport for small groups. A 28 foot Bertram is used for both diving and sportfishing as demand requires. The fleet is moored just across the street from the Harbour Club and guests at the Spanish Wells Beach Resort are transported to dockside by bus.

The reef structure known as the **Devil's Backbone** is on the windward side of Spanish Wells and is dived with greater frequency during the summer than the winter. These sites are just a short ride from the dock and feature not only beautiful coral formations, but the legendary **Train Wreck**. It is supposedly the remains of a train stolen by the Confederates during the Civil War to be sold to Cuba to fund the insurrection. It sank when its barge foundered just ten minutes from the dock. The huge wheels sit upright and groupers, angelfish and triggerfish beg for handouts.

Possibly the most frequently requested dive in Eleuthera is the **Current Cut**. Strong currents are generated as the tides funnel through a narrow pass separating two islands. The current can run at 6 to 10 knots and divers drift through the cut at depths from 30 to 60 feet, maneuvering with fins and going with the flow. Each pass takes about 10 minutes and may be repeated up to three times in a normal session. The thrill of the ride is compounded by the rich marine life passing by, including eagle rays, sharks, jacks, barracuda and angelfish. The dive is very safe and controlled.

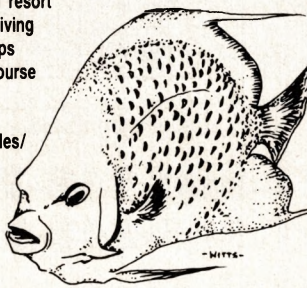
A comprehensive listing of the Spanish Wells dive sites is impossible in this short space. Suffice it to say that they are di-



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verse, interesting and ever-expanding as the dive staff explores new areas.

EXUMA

The Exuma cays form an archipelago that begins 30 miles to the southeast of Nassau and curves slightly for 130 miles. Great and Little Exuma constitute the mainland, and are referred to as the Exumas. George Town, on Great Exuma, is the largest settlement and offers an international airport, a number of fine hotels and guest houses, a harbor and marina, a lovely beach, several restaurants and a few shops. The diving services for the island are provided by long-time resident Wendel McGregor of EXUMA DIVERS and EXUMA AQUATICS, managed by Don Morrison.

Exuma Divers operates from a small shop across the street from the PEACE AND PLENTY HOTEL and utilizes a 38 foot houseboat powered by an inboard/outboard and a 24 foot outboard. The guests of Exuma Divers are frequently on a dive package with the Peace and Plenty Hotel, but, of course, walk-in traffic is also accommodated.

Exuma Aquatics is on the water directly across the street from the PIECES OF EIGHT HOTEL. They work with all of the hotels on the island, but primarily package trips with the Pieces of Eight and its sister hotel, the OUT ISLAND INN. Both hotels have the same ownership, but are uniquely separate properties. Pieces of Eight has 33 double air-conditioned rooms, a freshwater swimming pool, restaurant and lounge. It sits on a hillside overlooking the ocean. The Out Island Inn is on a postcard perfect beach with 88 air-conditioned double rooms, a restaurant and lounge, tennis courts, motor bike rentals, watersports activities and tropical landscaping. Only a short walk separates the two hotels and the central location of Exuma Aquatics provides service to the guests from each.

Exuma Aquatics has a surprisingly large retail area complete with T-shirts, dive gear and miscellaneous resort wear. There is a classroom, guest gear storage area, air fill station and a very complete darkroom with not only E-6 sinkline, but custom Cibachrome printing. Don Morrison was involved as a divemaster and photo assistant for several years in San Salvador and his experience is clearly evident in Exuma Aquatic's spacious, modern facility. Guests may rent underwater cameras and accessories, or enroll in one day, two day or full week underwater photo specialty courses. Exuma Aquatics is a factory authorized repair facility for both Helix and Ikelite. Their boats include one 34 foot flattop powered by twin 150 hp outboards, a 24 foot diesel powered inboard and a 30 foot deep-V custom sportfisherman powered by two massive 275 hp outboards.

The dive sites around Great Exuma are

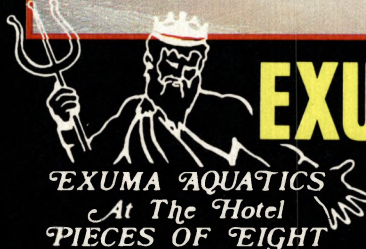
generally in the 30 to 50 foot range with coral ledges populated by snappers, grunts, goatfish, groupers, lobster and angelfish (especially French and gray angels). Large southern rays are frequently sighted at **Singray Reef**, and nurse sharks, conch and lobster populate **Duck Cay**. Some of the dive sites, such as **Black Rocks** are deeper, about 90 feet to the sand with coral heads rising to within 45 feet of the surface. Black coral is much in evidence there, as are grouper, nurse sharks and a wide variety of reef fish.

The ocean blue holes are an unusual feature of the Exuma dive profile. **Angelfish Blue Hole** is the most famous, prob-

ably owing to the two dozen hand-fed French angels that cruise around the opening. The siphon action of the blue hole moves lots of nutrients, consequently there are lots of fish in the vicinity. A large green moray lives in the surrounding rocks and there are squirrelfish tame enough to settle into the palm of a hand. Barracuda, hogfish and an eagle ray were also present on our dive.

SAN SALVADOR

At the time of this writing, the RIDING ROCK INN on San Salvador is in the final stages of preparations for its grand re-opening. This is long-awaited news to the



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Bahamas

thousands of divers who had come to appreciate the quality of diving here in the past and mourned the closing of the Inn. Well, now Riding Rock is open under new management and veteran San Salvador divemaster Al Zamrok has returned as manager for the dive and marina operations. The diving is as good, if not better than ever after the three year respite from divers. I'm sure the pet groupers still re-

member that **Snapshot Reef** is the place for the handouts.

The advantages to the Riding Rock Inn had to do with the convenience factors of the dive shop and photo center being dockside and the dive sites within 15 minutes of the dock on the lee side of the island. The venerable flattops of the old days have been replaced with a 30 foot diesel powered Island Hopper and a 32 foot Stevens deep-V diesel. These boats are equipped with platforms, ladders, tank racks, etc.

The hotel has 24 air-conditioned rooms, a freshwater swimming pool, 10 villas, a restaurant and lounge, and an asphalt tennis court (with tennis rackets provided as a courtesy).

Just a look through the pages of SKIN DIVER Magazine in the late 1970s will show you the photographic potential of the place. Large tame groupers; wall dives that start at 40 feet; tremendous fish life and spectacular visibility; the boilers and resident green moray at the wreck of the **Frascate**, the cooperative spotted morays; and endless macro subjects. Welcome back San Salvador.

LONG ISLAND

More than 90 miles in length and some 400 square miles in area, Long Island is about 26 miles to the east of George Town. In the world of diving, the STELLA MARIS INN is better known than the island and that is partially owing to the fame of **Shark Reef**. Daily excursions are taken to this magic bit of reef in 30 feet of water, where the sharks are classically conditioned to appear at the sound of the dive boat. Divers get to view the majestic beauty of sharks up close in a safe, controlled environment. For underwater photography and general diving thrills, Shark Reef is hard to equal.

But, Stella Maris is much more than just Shark Reef. It offers some of the best diving potential in the southern Bahamas. The hotel occupies 15 acres on a hilltop and is a portion of a 3,000 acre estate. Accommodations are in hotel rooms, one bedroom cottages, townhouses, plus 12 two bedroom villas with cooking facilities. Meals may be taken in the restaurant or self-catered. There is a lounge, three freshwater swimming pools, a magnificent beach and a separate dive shop and marina complex to which guests are shuttled in the diver transport vehicle.

But the big news this year at Stella Maris is that the *Sol Mar III* is finished. Under construction for eight years, the *Sol Mar III* is a 65 foot long deep-V live-aboard dive boat. Powered by twin 671 GM diesels, it creates an exceptional dive platform at anchor and will cruise at 15 knots in comfort to open up a much broader Stella Maris diving vista.

The reefs close to the resort are quite exceptional, not only Shark Reef, but a whole range of interesting sites along the lee side of the island. These include **Bar-**

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San Salvador, Bahamas

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racuda Heads, with its predictable schools of horse-eye jacks and **Grouper Valley** in 80 feet of water. There is also the new shipwreck, the **Comberbach**, sunk intentionally and sitting upright in 90 feet of water. It has tame groupers swimming through its intact wheelhouse and a shattered bus sitting in its forward hold. With the potential of a one or two night excursion on the *Sol Mar*, the virtually undived walls of Conception Island are accessible. Beginning in 40 feet of water and dropping away to 6,000 feet, these walls apparently offer world-class diving. I haven't been there yet, but it's definitely a trip I intend to make.

RUM CAY

Rum Cay features a unique dive resort, the RUM CAY CLUB. Accommodations consist of three large beachfront buildings with four double rooms in each and two cottages (14 rooms in all). The central bar and lounge with its hot tub, television and video cassette library, video games and boutique is on a bluff overlooking the Atlantic Ocean. Nearby are the kitchen and dining facilities and a very complete U/W photo lab including an automatic E-6 processing machine.

The Rum Cay Club has developed tastefully and offers a pleasant ambience

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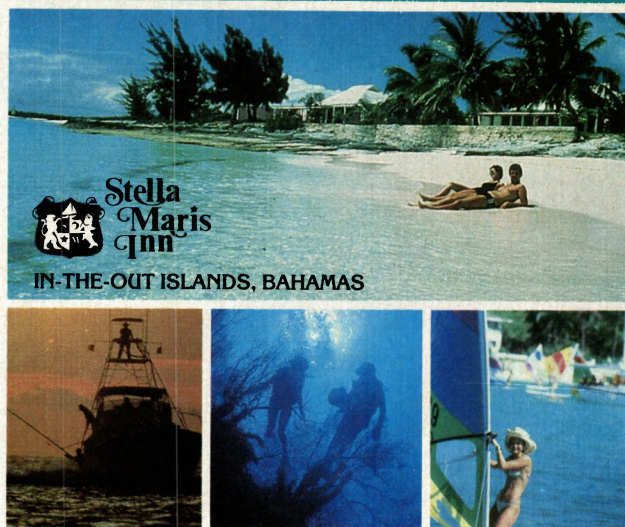
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Bahamas

and excellent dive opportunities. The boats are a pair of 34 foot flattops. The dive operations are now under the direction of Brian and Cyndi Willy. The advantages to diving at Rum Cay derive from the fascinating underwater reef structures, rich fish life and the fact that Rum Cay Club is on the lee side of the island in the winter. During the summer the prevailing winds are light and have a welcome, cooling effect.

There are 30 mooring buoys marking Rum Cay dive sites. Among them **Snowfields** stands out as one of the best, with a brilliant, snowy white sand bottom surrounded by a collection of small coral heads harboring densely prolific and unique macro subjects. The wall dives begin at 60 to 70 feet. There are fish

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feeding stations at many of the reefs in the 20 to 30 foot range.

CROOKED ISLAND

Near the southern end of the Bahamas chain lies Crooked Island. There is a small grass runway and no commercial flights, but if you can get there, PITTS-TOWN POINT LANDINGS offers a small beach hotel with just 12 rooms, a dining room and a lounge. There is diving available from the 19 foot outboard skiffs that comprise the dive fleet and good snorkeling just offshore.

LIVE-ABOARD DIVE BOATS

The fleet of dive boats touring the Bahamas from bases along the Florida coast and within the Bahamas is likely to be among the most sophisticated in the world. Several of the vessels are million dollar floating resorts with air-conditioning, private staterooms with *en suite* showers, gourmet dining and video cassettes. Others are slightly more utilitarian with semi-private accommodations and less plush interiors. Each will be set up specifically to cater to the needs of the active diver with platforms and ladders at the stern, tank racks, guest gear storage, compressors and chase boats. Each will be crewed by a staff skilled in boat handling, navigation to the best of the dive spots and general operations. Some of the vessels will be power and some will be sail. The range and itineraries will vary from boat to boat, but for those wishing to maximize their in-water time, the live-aboard boat is a very viable alternative.

BLACKBEARD'S CRUISES, operated by Bruce and Peggy Purdy, operates from the port of Miami with three 65 foot sailboats. The *Morning Star*, *Sea Explorer* and *Pirate's Lady* are fiberglass single-masted sloops with auxiliary diesel power. The crew of eight for each ship conducts seven day, six night trips with ample time devoted to both sailing and diving. The average cruise might visit Bimini, the Berry Islands, Freeport and West End on Grand Bahama. This season they have begun an extended cruise program as far as Nassau.

The M/V *ISLAND FANTASY* is a 90 foot mini-cruise ship operating out of Riviera Beach, FL. She is a deluxe vessel with eight double staterooms, twin 871 GM diesels, full electric power with 24 hour air-conditioning, 30 cfm compressor, freshwater maker, Loran, radar, sportfishing equipment, three color televisions with VCRs, and a fully equipped, modern galley. Captains Frank and Dee Hammett and Tom Wormack pilot the ship on a fascinating Bahamas cruise that includes encounters with wild dolphins, wall dives, shallow reef dives and night dives. Gourmet cuisine is a part of the *Fantasy* experience on this luxurious vessel that can accommodate 16 passengers as doubles, and up to 32 as quads.

The *SEA FEVER*, operated by Captain

Tom Guarino, departs Miami Beach for five day cruises to Bimini, Cay Sal, the Berry Islands, Jolter Cays and Victory Reef. Since these areas are so far distant, a single cruise couldn't visit them all, but several of the best of these Bahamas favorites will be included. The 20 knot cruising speed of the *Sea Fever* makes the crossing a pleasure and extends the potential range. The vessel has an aluminum hull for safety and speed and the boat has been completely renovated with the diver in mind. There is air-conditioning, two generators, two compressors, 2,000 gallons of fresh water, stereo and a logically configured tank rack and gear storage area adjacent to the spacious dive platform and ladders. Twenty-two divers may be berthed in three double cabins and a four, five and six passenger cabin. The quality of the cruise is enhanced by Captain Guarino's love of diving and affable personality.

The *BOTTOM TIME* is a 65 foot custom dive boat operating out of Ft. Lauderdale for groups of 12-17 divers. She will soon be joined by the *BOTTOM TIME II*, a unique vessel incorporating an all aluminum catamaran hull to minimize the rolling motions often associated with monohulls. The *Bottom Time II* will be 80 feet long with a 30 foot beam. Her insulated decks will ensure quiet cruising; twin 800 horsepower Rolls Royce diesels will ensure speed. Numerous creature comforts include two water makers, color televisions with VCRs, air-conditioning, air compressors, complete E-6 processing and three water entry stations. Captain A.J. Bland prefers to visit the more remote areas of the Berry Islands and the Exumas, but the actual itinerary of the cruise is influenced by guests' interests.

The *SEA AGGRESSOR* departs West Palm Beach for tours that feature a wild dolphin encounter and a variety of other diving within their unlimited dive package. The vessel is 95 feet long, air-conditioned and superbly outfitted to suit the diver. She has a dual compressor system, 40 aluminum 80 tanks, on deck head and E-6 processing lab. Her double and single berth staterooms can accommodate 21 people.

Other live-aboard boats include the *SHARK* and *BAREFOOT ISLAND SAILING CRUISES* from Miami, and the *R/V SEA DRAGON*, departing Nassau for the Exuma Cays.

For further information regarding Bahamas dive packages, please contact the individual resort or dive operator, or inquire at the Bahamas Office of Sports Information at 255 Alhambra Circle, Suite 415, Coral Gables, Florida 33134. Phone (800) 32-SPORT or (305) 442-4867. The Bahamas has also installed a toll free reservation service to make it easier to book hotel rooms throughout the islands. By dialing Bahamas Reservation Service at (800) 327-0787, information regarding transportation, travel documents, etc., may also be obtained. 



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DEEP ROVER

(Continued from Page 64)

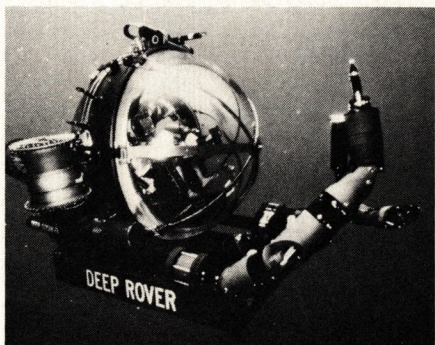
Of the few dives that have been made there, none had been for biological research, Robison said.

The use of one man submersibles for deep water biological work began with Robison and fellow UCSB scientist Alice Alldredge in 1982—when they received a three year grant from the National Science Foundation for deep water submersible work.

That year, they and fellow researchers dived to 1,780 feet in the Santa Barbara Channel, using the submersible *Wasp* to make their observations and collections.

The 1982 expedition proved that submersibles normally used in offshore oil-field operations are useful tools for scientific work.

The second scientific submersible expedition was in July 1984, when Robison, Widder and three other scientists from U.S. universities dived down to 1,900 feet in the Santa Barbara Channel.



photo/courtesy UCSB

The Deep Rover off Santa Barbara

The channel dives were resounding successes, Robison said. Scientists participating in those two expeditions not only learned of new deep water phenomena, but they realized there were whole areas of studies to be explored.

"The Santa Barbara Channel revealed things we hadn't even anticipated," Robison said. "It changed our perception about ecology in the oceanic water column, below the surface. Once we got there, we were astonished how much more complex it was."

Robison said he has had his scientific eye on the Monterey Canyon for years, because of its "diversity of sea life." The scientists worked from the Oregon State University research ship *Wecoma*, 10 miles from shore, in an area where cold water rises from the depths.

"My ultimate is to have access to the tools that would let us go anywhere in the ocean we need to go, to answer the research questions we want to investigate," Robison said. "We've had extremely limited access to the ocean. Our dream is unlimited access—to any depth at any time." 

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the finest dive stores and the finest divers
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DACOR POCKET LIGHT

Newest Multi-Use
Mini

The Dacor Pocket Light is powered by two AA alkaline or ni-cad cells. It is easy to assemble. A compact, lightweight mini-light, it is only 5½ inches long. It costs \$9.30.

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY BONNIE J. CARDONE

Today's divers can choose from a wide variety of underwater lights. No matter what your needs, there is a light, or lights, that will satisfy them. Many divers prefer a large or medium sized light for primary use but carry a smaller light as a backup. Besides their underwater applications, these mini lights are great topside. Since they are water-resistant,

they can be used in the rain, on boats, in the snow or on camping trips: Any place you would hesitate to take a light that could be ruined by dampness. Because these lights are compact and lightweight, you take them virtually anywhere easily. They are so inexpensive, anyone can afford to own a couple.

One of the newest entries in the mini-

light market comes from Dacor. The Pocket Light is only five and one-half inches long, with a diameter of about one inch. It is small enough to fit into a BC pocket or a purse, or you can attach it to a lanyard through a loop on one end. It is powered by two AA cells and either alkalines or rechargeable ni-cads may be used. Fresh alkalines will provide a burn time of more than eight hours.

The Pocket Light has only six components, plus the batteries. There is a main housing with an O-ring, a lens bezel, a battery spring, a bulb and a bulb socket. To prepare the light for use, clean and lubricate the O-ring with silicone grease. Then insert the spring in the housing and add the batteries, negative end down. Place the bulb socket on top of the spring, screw on the bezel and, let there be light!

The Pocket Light turns on and off easily. You might want to practice topside because the bezel requires *only* one-half turn: One-half turn clockwise and it's on; one-half turn counter clockwise and it's off. Maintenance is equally easy. Rinse with fresh water and let dry when the diving day is over. Do not leave the light in direct sunlight or temperatures of more than 90°F with the lens bezel in place. Remove the batteries if the light is to be stored for any length of time.

The Dacor Pocket Light (catalogue number 7030-00) sells for \$9.30. See it at your Dacor dealer. 

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SDM travel SECTION

It was more than 20 years ago that I made my first diving forays to the Caribbean. In 1965 I traveled to Jamaica, driving from Montego Bay to Negril with the car trunk full of tanks. We dove from a tippy native dugout.

In those days, my first trip to Bonaire (1968) revealed a grand total of seven rust-pitted tanks on the entire island. All diving was done off the beach from trucks or rental cars as dive boats were totally unknown.

Most divers never experienced those pioneering days and recoil in horror at the discomfort we took for granted. We would go through anything to dive, yet our ample reward was to explore virgin reefs filled with huge groupers, hogfish, rays, turtles and other marine life.

Virgin reefs are hard to find today but, if you go far enough offshore, you can still dive Caribbean reefs as they were 20 years ago.

The best example of this is Lighthouse Reef off Belize and the nearby Chinchorro Banks off the Southern Yucatan. These coral seamounts are 60 miles offshore and therefore impossible for native fishermen to work daily. Also, the nearest hotel is 60 miles away. At least for now, these wonderful unspoiled gems can offer you a glimpse into a hallowed past.

How can you step back into Caribbean history? For years, See & Sea Travel groups have enjoyed the 75 foot *Isla Mia* as a floating hotel at these remote reefs, guided by Captain Henny Tromm. Now Henny's son Jon commands an *Isla Mia* that has been remodeled from stern to stern.

Part of the charm of *Isla Mia* is that this gracious old lady really fits in with a mood of 20 years ago. Outfitted with five private double cabins and a dor-



BELIZE: The Reefs Time Forgot

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY
BY CARL ROESSLER

mitory cabin for six more passengers, this sturdy converted shrimp trawler handles 60 mile crossings with stability and comfort. She is completely air-conditioned in her sleeping quarters for that good night's sleep you need after four or five great dives. Food aboard *Isla Mia* is plentiful, varied and excellent and her crew offers friendly, courteous service.

Yet the greatest attraction of all is that she visits Belize's greatest dive sites. We spend our precious dive week amid the splendors of Lighthouse Reef. For groups who wish to spend ten days to two weeks, *Isla Mia* offers unique cruises from Lighthouse Reef to Cozumel via the untouched



Top left: The live-aboard dive vessel *Isla Mia* off Belize. Above: The *Isla Mia* viewed from underwater. Top right: A diver photographs basket sponges.

Chinchorro Banks; these are thrills that haven't been seen or explored in 20 years.

Just what is this diving offering that sends group after group home singing the praises of *Isla Mia* and these remote reefs? I spent a week aboard *Isla Mia* last September, and came away with a good understanding. First, we wandered to all of the greatest sites of Lighthouse Reef. On the western drop-off near Long Island, we enjoyed the company of a black

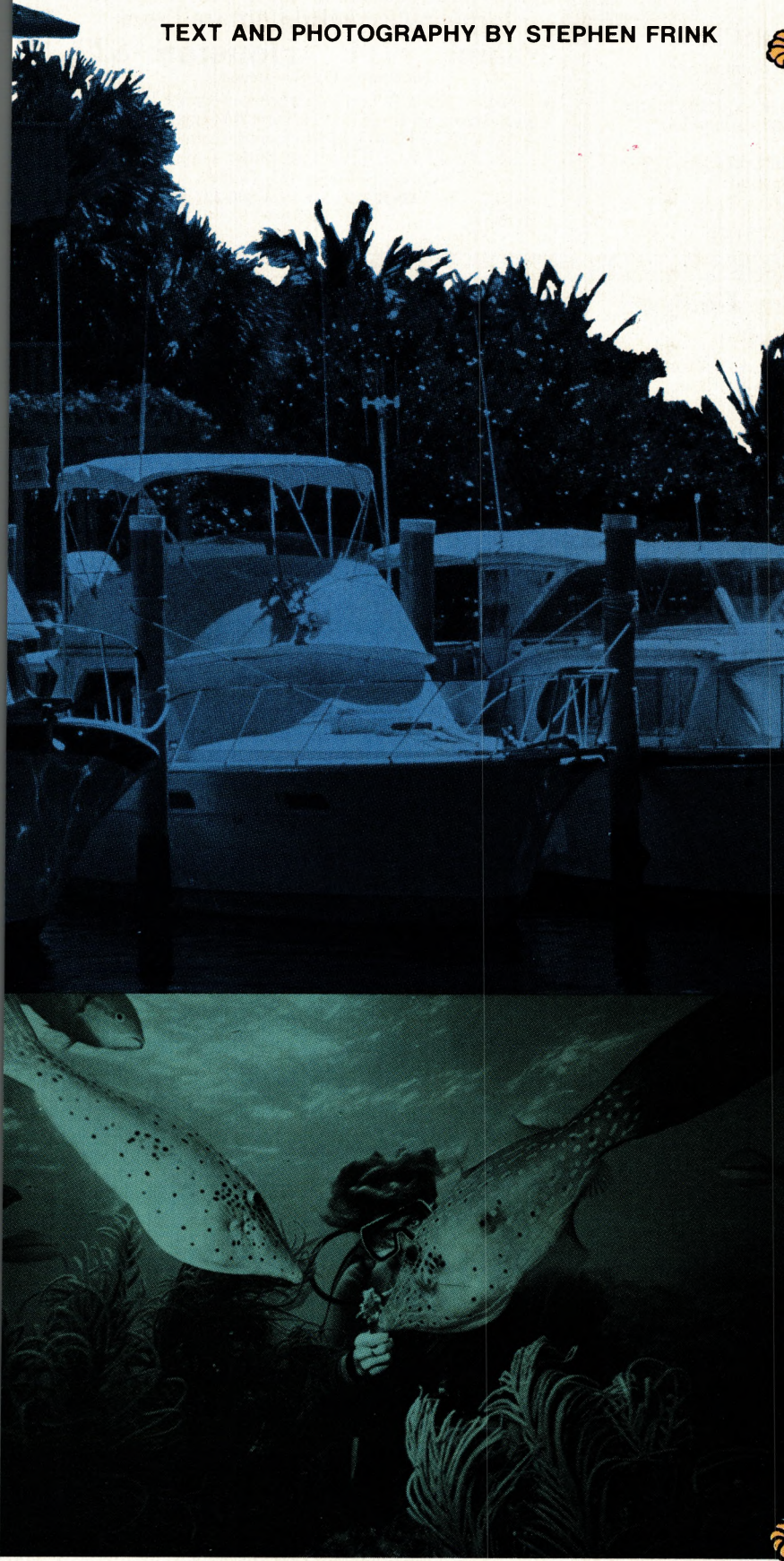
(Continued on Page 134)



Marina Del Mar (top) and Ocean Divers (left) cooperate to offer Key Largo visitors a full-service dive vacation. Above: One of the Marina Del Mar rooms. Right: Fish feeding at Molasses Reef, John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park.

Key Largo's Luxury Dive Resort

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY STEPHEN FRINK



"Symbiosis: From the Greek *symplo-*
ōsis, the state of living together. The
living together of two dissimilar organisms
in a mutually beneficial relationship," *Web-*
ster's New Collegiate Dictionary. Divers
recognize this concept from observations
of clownfish and anemones. While I would
hesitate to carry the analogy too far, a
comparable relationship has developed in
a unique resort setting on the shores of
John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park in
Key Largo, Florida.

Ocean Divers and Marina Del Mar are
separate businesses, but they have be-
come a close cooperative venture in their
efforts to provide the greatest convenience
possible for their guests. Geography and
fate initially worked in their favor and
placed them on directly adjacent proper-
ties. They are on a main access canal to
the Atlantic Ocean, just a short boat ride
from many of the most popular dive sites
in Pennekamp. The hotel is just a short
walk from the dive boats. The boats are
docked just a few steps from the gear ren-
tal facility and the guest equipment storage
room. You can't roll out of your bed and
onto the reef, but Ocean Divers and Marina
Del Mar are working to make the steps in
between as hassle free as possible.

The resort complex is in the heart of Key
Largo, close to shopping and commerce,
yet insulated from the noise and commo-
tion of the Overseas Highway. Formerly
known as Port Largo Resort, the name
change to Marina Del Mar reflects the
overall nautical ambiance of the property,
the superb marina and the wide variety of
aquatic activities available to guests. The
most recent improvement to the complex is
a tasteful three story hotel built on the wa-
terfront. It has a glass enclosed elevator to
transport guests and dive gear between
floors. This brings the lodging to 56 units,
some of which are hotel rooms and others
are one or two bedroom suites. There is a
beautiful freshwater swimming pool with
ample decks for sunbathing, a new fitness
center with both free weights and universal
machines, outdoor spa, and Coconuts, an
impressive new lounge and restaurant.

The new Coconuts was completed in the
spring of 1986 and overlooks both the ma-
rina and pool. The 5,600 square foot build-
ing is constructed of native coral rock, nat-
ural wood and glass. It features a sophisti-
cated sound system and light show to aug-
ment the nightly entertainment. There is a
dance floor, especially active on weekends

(Continued on Page 124)



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I hadn't been to the Cayman Islands for a year and a half. Beginning with the modern airport terminal, I noticed several changes. Although new buildings and businesses dotted Grand Cayman, my favorite features, the superb diving and the friendly people, have not altered. In fact, after my encounter with Don Foster's Dive Grand Cayman operation at the Royal Palms Hotel, I left with only one question: Why did I stay away so long?

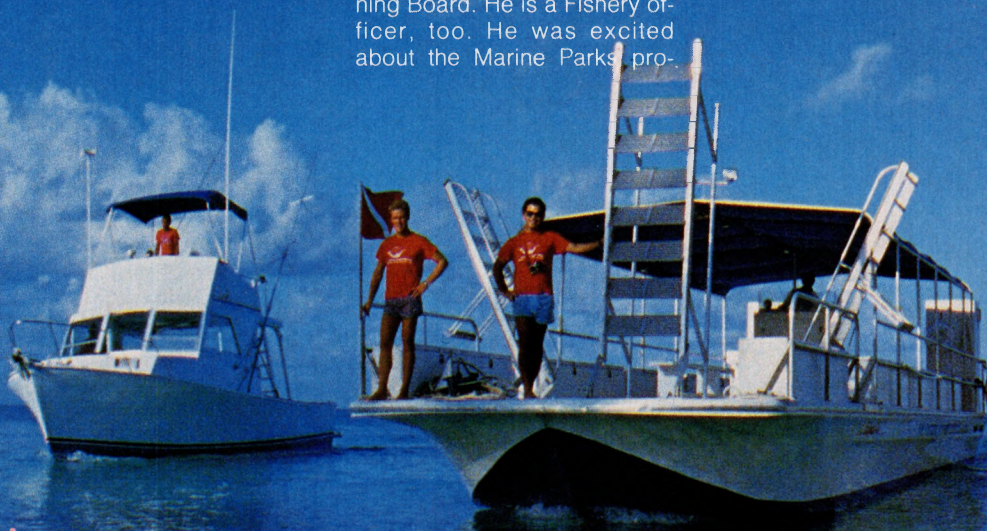
Having cleared customs and immigration, I collected my belongings and looked for a rental car. In addition to the major chains, local agencies such as Coconut Rentals are readily accessible. For a moment, I even toyed with the idea of zipping around the island on one of Cayman Cy-

cle's motorscooters. With the mountain of camera equipment I had brought, however, what I really needed were four wheels. Enter Don Foster. At six feet two inches, Don always stands out in a crowd. When he finished chatting with a Cayman Airways pilot, he turned to leave. I walked over and introduced myself. Noticing my baggage, he volunteered a ride. Holding my duffle bag in one hand and an equipment case in the other, walking toward his truck, Don and I chatted together like old acquaintances. Later I would

discover that this relaxed and friendly attitude pervaded the entire Don Foster's staff.

During the ten minute ride to the hotel, I discovered quite a bit about Don. As we pulled away from the airport, Foster checked in with the dive boats and the shop on his in-dash VHF marine radio. Jil Foster reminded Don of his afternoon schedule. Not only does Don manage the day-to-day affairs of one of the islands' largest dive operations, he also serves on the Marine Parks Committee, the Marine Conservation Board and the Planning Board. He is a Fishery officer, too. He was excited about the Marine Parks pro-

posal that should be approved by Grand Cayman's executive council and become implemented by this summer. According to the plan, the carefully chosen restricted use areas designated as environmental zones, replenishment zones and marine parks will ensure that Cayman Island fauna survive for future generations. As part of this preservation effort, Don Foster will be a member of the team that will install additional permanent moorings.



GRAND



Don Foster's Dive Grand Cayman, at the Royal Palms Hotel, offers divers full service and flexibility in arranging their activities and accommodations. The dive sites visited are nearby and include some of the best off Grand Cayman. Top: Four of Don Foster's dive boats, lined up and ready. Above: A diver with Cecil the lobster at the Oro Verde. Right: Brad Graham and Monica in the Photo Centre.



After checking in and unpacking, I strolled down to the shops at the front of the hotel. Ocean Designs, in the Cayman Falls Shopping Plaza, has a branch in the hotel's lobby. Tropical resortwear hung in colorful displays. Ocean Designs II adjoins the dive shop. While vibrantly colored divers' T-shirts lined one wall, attracting my eye to other parts of the dive store were everything from Scubapro BCs to exotic suntan lotions. With C-card and log in hand, I stepped for-

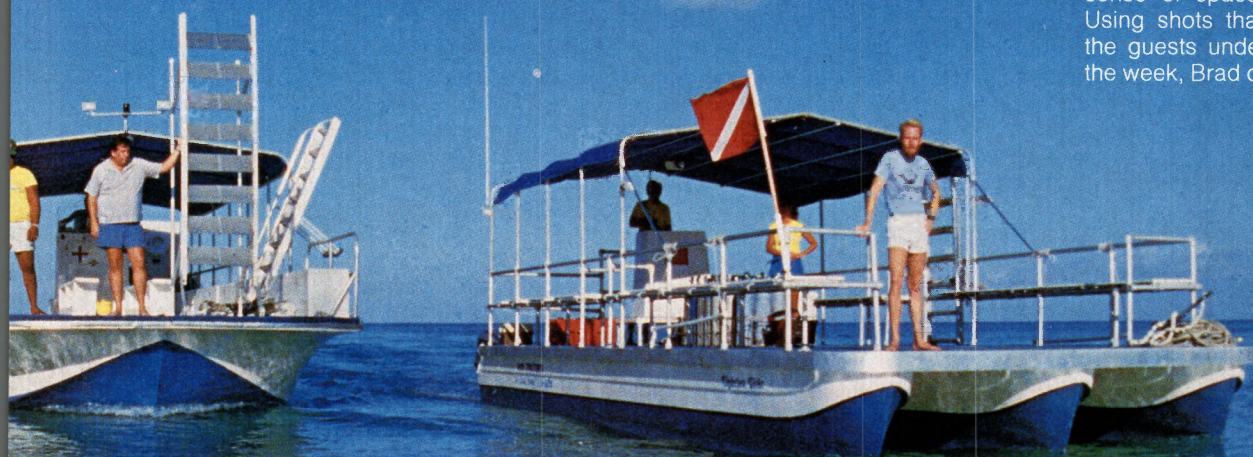
ward to sign up for a dive charter. Larry made it easy. Cheerfully explaining where to meet the dive boats, when they departed and where to rinse my gear, he concluded by asking what I would like on board. During my stay, I never carried a tank or weightbelt. Don Foster calls this attention "personalized diving." I called it marvelous!

My next stop was the Photo Centre. Bradley Graham, resident photo pro, was helping a customer. He patiently repeated the operating instructions for the Nikonos V and strobe the customer wanted to rent. The fellow had never used a

Nikonos before. After spending extra time making the man feel comfortable with the camera, Brad turned to me. I inquired about the different photography courses. In the one day course, students go through an evening session prior to the next day's dive trip and their work is reviewed by Brad the following night. Specialties include courses in marine wildlife, macro and wide angle. His advanced class covers marketing, A/V shows and multi-lighting. Along with Monica, Brad runs the lab. They process many different

film formats. Bradley Graham received his formal training at the Brooks Institute in California. Foster has combined the full service dive resort and photographic center with a professional photographer, placing them all in one location on Seven Mile Beach. Considering the quantity and variety of rental equipment available, the multitude of lab services offered and the expertise of the instructors, Don Foster's Photo Centre should become an underwater photographers' mecca.

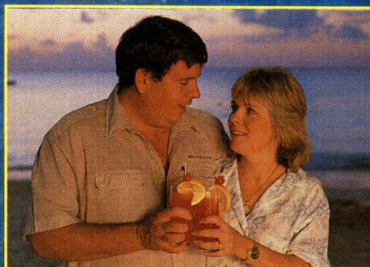
Before the Tuesday and Saturday night barbecues, Bradley shows his work. His images reveal an excellent sense of space and design. Using shots that he takes of the guests underwater during the week, Brad creates a show



CAYMAN'S CHANGING FACE

Don Foster's Burgeoning Dive Operation

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY
BY MARK M. LAWRENCE



Above: Don and Jil Foster. Don is a Fishery officer and serves on the Marine Parks Committee. Right: Scuba introduction at the Royal Palms Hotel. The dive shop.



FOSTER'S/ROYAL PALMS

entitled "Photo Buddies." Divers gather around to cheer when their pictures appear on the screen. Since the visitors usually buy all of the slides, the show is always different.

Three things made my boat trips particularly enjoyable: the layout of the craft, the attitude of the crew and the beauty of the dive sites. Instead of a catamaran configuration, Foster's spacious flattops, the 52 foot *Cayman Sea* and *Cayman Sun*, are built on houseboat type hulls. The boats rode smoothly. For easy access from the beach, Don has installed large bow ladders. Side mounted ladders facilitate water exits.

Onboard are dry boxes, a two tier camera table, twin changing rooms and a freshwater hose for quick rinses. Large coolers contain either ice water or fruit punch. Like the crew's spirits, the mood of the stereo music was upbeat. Mike's and Steve's orientation talks shared the same qualities as Woody's and Dave's onsite briefings; they were informative, entertaining and mercifully short. Throughout the trips, the divemasters repeated their offer to assemble guests' dive gear. Many passengers obviously appreciated this. Whenever I started up

the exit ladders, I received help with my cameras and dive equipment. Watching the staff interact with the other divers, I noticed they tried to do as much or as little for each person as that guest wanted.

Ghost Mountain stands off the North Wall. From the top of the main drop-off, this spire seems to materialize from the middle of the blue void. Schooling fish cling to the crest. Corals stack in layers. Spiraling down the pinnacle, I found many interesting photo opportunities.

We also toured the *Oro Verde*. In 50 feet of water, it lies on its side. Out toward the deeper water, shy garden eels poked their heads out of sandy tunnels. All around the wreck swam inquisitive angels, yellowtails, sergeant majors and grouper. While exploring a dark hallway, I stumbled across two Nassau groupers squaring off for a contest. On the shoreward side, an unconcerned fat male hogfish cruised the reef. Dave brought out Cecil, an eight pound lobster. Eagles' Nest was named for the frequent groups of eagle rays that glide across the reef edge here.

As at other locations, black coral grows abundantly. In several cleaning stations, tiger groupers hung motionlessly. Aquarium earned its name because of the incredible numbers of fish that wait for divers. Just as on the *Oro Verde*, Aquarium residents swam up off the reef to greet divers. When a divemaster re-

leases a small handful of bread, he disappears behind a frenzied blur of colorful tropicals. Perhaps my only difficulty with diving Grand Cayman was deciding on which site to visit next.

Don Foster's packages gave me choice after choice. In addition to the daily two tank trips, an afternoon dive or a night dive was offered.

For those who prefer accommodations above the standard level, guests can sign up for private suites or luxury condominiums. I was also pleased to find that the food plans were open ended. During the day, I walked past the Photo Centre to the Marketbasket. They had everything from cold sodas to canned goods. Although I often ate dinner at the Royal Palms Hotel, on a few nights I tried other restaurants. L'escargot serves excellent French and continental cuisine. Its award winning chef has been cooking for more than 30 years. His catch of the day with a side dish went for \$10.50 CI; a full course dinner cost under \$25 CI. The Caribbean Club has an island atmosphere with fine style and I found a little bit of Texas at the Lone Star.

I missed the Tuesday Treasure Hunt. Finding hidden doubloons wins divers a T-shirt, champagne or, if they are very lucky, a one week return trip for two. I'd like to make it back for the operation's fifth anniversary bash on July the fourth.

(Continued on Page 104)



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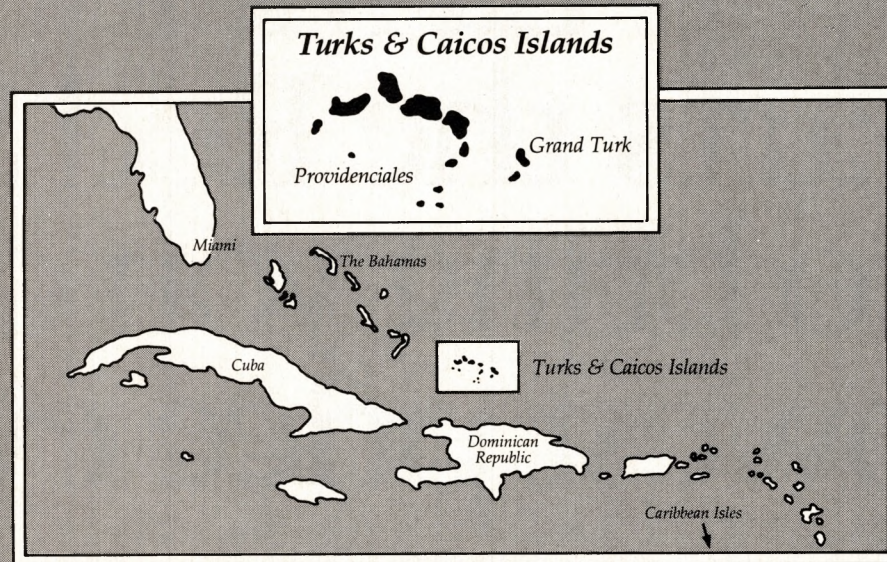
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FOSTER'S/ROYAL PALMS

(Continued from Page 100)

Then again, I'd like to try their two resort/two island package with the Tiara Beach Hotel on Cayman Brac. What a wonderful way to sample both islands.

After experiencing Don Foster's Dive Grand Cayman Ltd., I realized I'd stayed away from the Caymans too long. One visit was not enough. Don Foster's is the kind of place you want to come back to again and again—I know I will.

For reservations or information—for groups or individuals—contact: Scuba Tours Inc., (800) 526-1394; in NJ phone (201) 256-9115; or Don Foster's Dive Grand Cayman Ltd., P.O. Box 151, Grand Cayman, BWI; (809) 949-7025; on the island phone 949-5679. 🐠

PIRATE'S LADY

Blackbeard's Cruises has added a third boat, the *Pirate's Lady*, to its dive/sail cruises to the Bahamas. The *Pirate's Lady* joins the *Sea Explorer* and the *Morning Star*, running four, seven and nine day cruises departing Miami.

For more information phone Blackbeard's Cruises at (800) 327-9600 or (305) 888-1226 from Florida and Canada. Write to P.O. Box 661091, Miami Springs, FL 33266. 🐠

OCEAN DIVERS COURSES

Ocean Divers of Key Largo, Florida is offering an aquanaut certification course. For 24 hours participants will live four fathoms below the ocean's surface in a special habitat featuring hot showers, beds, stereo and galley.

The program will include hotel accommodations as well as trips to the wreck of the *Benwood* and to the reefs of Pennekamp Park.

Additionally, Eleanor T. Klein will con-



photo/Mark M. Lawrence

duct PADI instructor development and professional educator programs at Ocean Divers. These packages will also include lodging, meals and diving. IDCs are scheduled for Aug. 9-22, Sept. 24-Oct. 9 and Nov. 27-Dec. 10.

For information contact Ocean Divers, P.O. Box 1113, Key Largo, FL 33037; (305) 451-1113 in Florida or toll free (800) 451-1113. 🐠

CAYMAN SUBS

The 800 foot wall dives have become so popular in Grand Cayman that Research Submersibles Limited has added a second submarine to its educational/adventure program. *Deep Explorer III*, like its sister submarine, can accommodate two passengers and a pilot, and will make four dives a day to 800 feet off the West Wall of Grand Cayman. 🐠

LUCIA/IMPERIAL

Dennis Lucia has been appointed national sales manager, wader division, at Imperial Manufacturing Co., Bremerton, Washington. According to David Stancil, Imperial's general manager, Lucia will be responsible for sales and service of Imperial's fishing and hunting waders and will also supervise customer service of its scuba diving suits.

For more information, contact: Imperial Manufacturing Co., Box 4119, Bremerton, WA 98312; (206) 674-2316. 🐠

SPORTS SUITS OF AUSTRALIA

The article on Sports Suits of Australia in the April SDM included an incorrect address and phone number. The new information is: Sports Suits of Australia, P.O. Box 2827 Sepulveda, CA 91343; (818) 376-0402. 🐠

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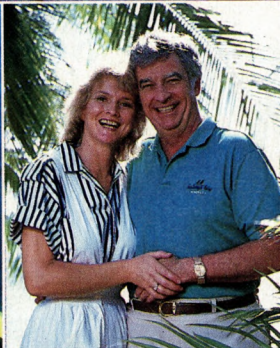
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SKIN DIVER MAY 1986 105



Center: Joyce and Dick Doumeng have relocated their St. Thomas Diving Club headquarters to the Bolongo Bay Beach and Tennis Club (which they also own). Clockwise from top left: The *Mohawk II* live-aboard dive boat, operated by the St. Thomas Diving Club. The beach at Bolongo Bay under a full moon. Use of watersports equipment is free to guests. Janice Lucas at the stern railing of the *Cartanser Sr.* Lynn Creamer and Janice Lucas with trunkfish at Cow and Calf. Opposite page: View of the pool and ocean from the outdoor restaurant.



They say the beaches near here are among the most seductive in existence. I believe them. Just over the mountain, Megan's is rumored to be one of the world's top ten. These are honeymooner's beaches, right out of the movie, *Blue Lagoon*: places you can spend hours building castles in the sun or moments alone with a friend in the glow of a Caribbean moon.

The ride to these beaches from the airport of St. Thomas in the U.S. Virgin Islands takes you right through the middle of Charlotte Amalie. Along the southern coast, pirate ships and million dollar yachts mix on a bay overlooked by a castle. You almost expect Captain Hook to emerge from the tourist crowd. The scene is simultaneously a part of *Peter Pan*, some upscale yachting magazine and a shopping mall where everyone

point for something more important: your soul. Gazing at the sea while lying beneath the tropical sun, beach sand running through your fingers as you listen to the rattle of palm fronds, it is all but impossible to recall there is a world beyond your vision.

In this cove, built on the beach facing Little Buck Island, Dick and Joyce Doumeng's Bolongo Bay Beach and Tennis Club is so well hidden behind thick coconut palms it is almost impossible to see from the ocean. A favorite Virgin Island spot for sunseekers, the resort has recently been renovated. An outdoor, three tiered, canopy covered restaurant looks down on the pool, beach and cove. New rooms face the water. And, down by the tennis courts, a second, smaller outdoor restaurant overlooks the palm lined sand.

The resort has always been water-

popular USVI dive locations: Andre's Reef, the wreck of the *Cartanser Sr.* or Cow and Calf are all less than one-half hour away.

Andre's Reef is near the northwest tip of Little Buck (not the park near St. Croix). A sloping reef slides from 40 to 80 feet ending at a sugar sand bottom where stingrays, eels and octopus live. Named for one of St. Thomas Diving Club's managers, the reef is a popular spot with the return guests who, it seems, often come back just to dive with Andre.

The *Cartanser Sr.* freighter lies split in half in shallow water. The 190 foot long wreck has the dubious distinction of having sunk twice—the first time near St. Thomas and the second time after being refloated and towed to this site as an artificial reef. Its bow section leans to port and the engine room can be entered eas-

Bolongo Bay Beach Club

Home Of St. Thomas Diving Club

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY STEVE LUCAS



grins and wears shorts. Seaplanes skip across the water, spewing plumes of ocean spray behind. White cruise ships gleam in the tropic sun as their passengers embark into a jungle of shops that sell cameras, crystal, diamonds, perfume and a hundred dozen other bargains you just can't live without.

Right by the cruise ships, the road begins a steep incline. Up it climbs to a point where you can view the island as if you were suspended in a hot air balloon. Then it drops: Over a roller coaster mountain you descend into a part of St. Thomas the cruise ship people hardly know exists.

A horseshoe shaped cove, Bolongo, has been carved out of the rock face of a weathered southern shoreline by eons of wind and waves. A collection point for wide patches of the same sands that are scattered on some of this island's more touted beaches, it is also a collecting

sports oriented. Sunfish with colorful sails decorate the beach while giant, yellow wheeled water tricycles are lazily pedaled across the constantly rippling water. Free to guests, these grown-up water toys, as well as beach floats and snorkeling equipment, can be checked out without charge simply by asking at the dive club center. Those who have never experienced scuba are also encouraged to sign up for free introductory lessons in the pool.

Diving is beginning to play an even more important role than ever before at Bolongo. The Doumengs have moved the main headquarters of their St. Thomas Diving Club from Villa Olga, near downtown Charlotte Amalie, to this more relaxed beach property. Now guests staying at either hotel begin their dives from this private lagoon. Bolongo is managed by Pam Balash and Andre Webber. Dive boats here are closer to some of the most

ily from a gash in its center. The prop has been removed, but a myriad of marine organisms has replaced it with color. It is a favorite backdrop for SKIN DIVER covers and dozens of magazine photos have been shot here. It is one of the most popular wreck sites in the Virgins.

Cow and Calf is a lonely rock divided into two pinnacles stuck out in the midst of the yachting channel. Below water a cavern opens up and provides cover for thousands of blue tinted glassy minnows and copper sweepers. To one side, a magnificent archway reaches high above the sand floor. Sponges, barnacles and a million other colorful organisms cling to its surfaces. This is one of Andre's favorite places to catch critters. If you let him know in advance, he can provide you with a tiny spotted trunkfish or one of a dozen other creatures for your photo buddy to hold.

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The waters average 76° to 86° year round, so wet suits are not always required. Underwater visibility ranges up to 120 feet around all the islands. You can enjoy shallow reefs, wall diving, deep diving and shipwreck diving. And, you can delve into history since many wrecks date back almost 200 years.

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BOLONGO BAY

STDC keeps its 68 foot floating motel, the *Mohawk II*, docked directly in front of the hotel. It can comfortably carry 16 divers in its eight air-conditioned staterooms. Anything from a single day beach and snorkeling trip to a week long live-aboard cruise to the wreck of the *Rhone* in the BVIs can be arranged. You may also choose to book four days in the Bolongo Bay Club and the remainder of your week living at sea on the *Mohawk*.

Bolongo Bay and the U.S. Virgin Islands are two of the easiest of the Caribbean's island destinations to reach. Direct flights are available from several mid and eastern U.S. gateways. Midway also offers flights from Chicago with only a single stop in Miami. There are no customs inspections upon arrival in St. Thomas and passports are not required. Some proof of citizenship is advisable since there is a simple customs and immigrations inspection when you depart.

Bolongo Bay reservations, color brochures and additional information about the St. Thomas Diving Club and the *Mohawk II* can be received by calling the USVI toll free at (800) 524-4746. Written requests can be directed to: Dick Doumeng, Bolongo Bay Beach and Tennis Club, P.O. Box 7337, St. Thomas, USVI 00801.

DIVING MEDICINE

(Continued from Page 18)

by a person who has an infection of the GI tract that causes diarrhea or vomiting. A classic and now uncommon example is typhoid fever, spread by contaminated water supplies as well. More common diarrhea-causing bacteria occur in tropical areas and produce traveler's diarrhea or turista. These illnesses can be spread by poor hygiene in a diving group. The same precautions invoked for stomach flu hold for bacterial GI illness.

Bacterial skin infections can be spread by the simple medium of water passage from one person to another. Pools are chlorinated for this reason and usually are not a problem. The open water of oceans and lakes usually keeps divers far enough apart to avoid the problem. Skin infections can be spread by sharing wetsuits, however. A thorough soap and water washing of a wetsuit will eliminate the risk from this source.

Infections by viruses, bacteria and other kinds of organisms have always been part of human existence. We have learned to prevent them by good hygiene and immunization and to treat them with a variety of antibiotics. It is the responsibility of each of us as divers to avoid spreading infection and illness to our fellow divers. Considerate and careful hygiene goes a long way toward achieving that goal.



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OIL RIG DIVING

Gulf Of Mexico's 4000 Platforms Attract Marine life . . . And Divers

BY PAUL K. DRIESSEN



photos/Richard P. Zingula

Those who think Greg Louganis wrote the book on platform diving may be surprised at a new twist being given the sport in the Gulf of Mexico. There, platform diving means heading offshore to explore the fascinating world beneath big oil and gas production platforms.

More than 4,000 platforms (aka: rigs or structures) are speckled across the gulf. Steel factories atop monstrous Gothic columns that plunge 20-400 feet or more to the seafloor, they were designed with one purpose in mind: to coax oil and natural gas out of reluctant rock formations

far beneath the ocean surface. In 1984, they and their cousins in California and Alaska extracted enough crude to power 34 million cars and enough gas to heat some 50 million Midwestern homes for the entire year.

However, they also serve another, equally important—though unintentional—role: that of the largest, and perhaps the best, artificial reef system in the world.

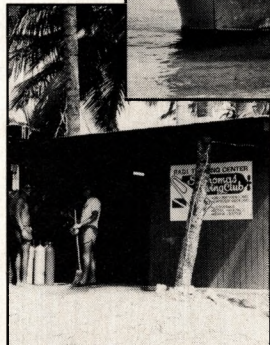
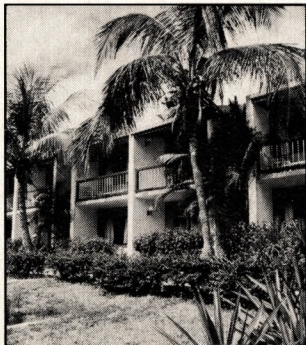
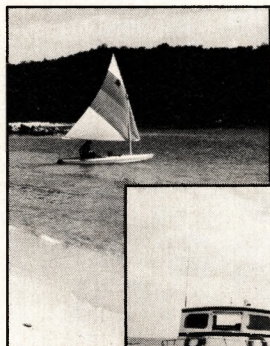
The early life stages of algae, coral, barnacles, shellfish and other marine life drift in currents until they find a suitable habitat—or die. Known as “encrusting”

or “biofouling” organisms (notorious for smothering ships’ hulls), they require a hard surface to survive: The larvae must cement themselves to a suitable substrate before they can metamorphose into adult form.

Unfortunately, natural reefs and hard bottoms are extremely scarce in the gulf and off most other U.S. coasts, because river sediments have created vast flat, muddy biological deserts. Sunken ships and other artificial reefs are in similarly short supply.

Enter the oil rigs. The main support col-

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PLATFORM DIVING

umns and reinforcing members of a single structure standing in 150 feet of water can provide up to two acres of hard substrate. This support system (also called a "jacket") is the secret ingredient in a prescription guaranteed to provide a unique and memorable diving experience.

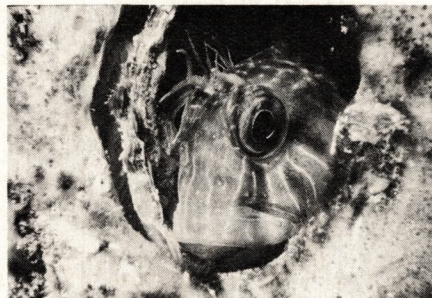
Almost as soon as a structure is installed, the jacket begins to be colonized by a dense carpet of encrusting critters. From a few yards away it is a dull, uninteresting mass of gray and brown, spotted with occasional patches of jade, gold and crimson. As a diver approaches, however, distinct forms begin to materialize, as though a microscope were being brought into focus.

Suddenly, the carpet is transformed, almost magically, into a fantasyland of algae, hard and soft corals, sponges, hydroids, sea urchins, featherdusters, bryozoans, gorgonians, solitary and colonial anemones, barnacles and bivalves. Exploding into a Neptune's gallery of endless hues, they can reach thicknesses of several inches to several feet, creating a rich and hospitable environment.

Shrimp, crabs, sea cucumbers, bristleworms, blennies, nudibranchs, larval and juvenile stages of larger fish and count-

less other small animals hide within this carpet and feed on its organisms—and on one another. Because the jackets rise up through the entire water column, they provide habitats for benthic, midwater and surface plants and animals, allowing each species to grow at its optimal depth.

The jackets thus form the base for a major food web. They also provide shelter from currents and large, stationary reference points for fish that forage away from the platforms in the gulf's featureless environs.



A blenny peers from an empty barnacle.

Their open structure allows water to circulate, bringing ample supplies of plankton for the filter feeders, fostering rapid growth and encouraging experiments in mariculture. A Louisiana scientist is evaluating oyster growth on platforms and a California company harvests large quantities of succulent mussels

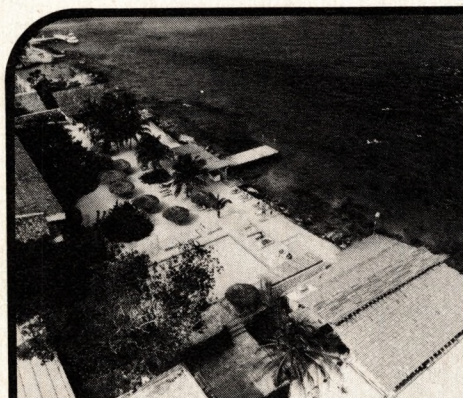
from platforms in the Santa Barbara Channel (SKIN DIVER, December 1984).

Scientific opinion once held that platforms merely concentrated or redistributed fish, making them easier prey for fishermen. Today, however, it is generally recognized that the rigs actually raise productivity levels and increase the variety, range, size and numbers of highly desirable fish and shellfish.

Some 150 species have been observed in the gulf that were unknown there 40 years ago, before offshore oil became such a big business. Studies have found that a single platform harbors 20-50 times more fish than do nearby soft bottoms, and up to five times more than neighboring natural reefs or hardbottom sites of similar size.

Spadefish, sheephead, triggerfish and butterflyfish browse on the encrusting organisms. Particularly in deeper gulf waters, tangs, hogfish, angelfish, cocoa damsels and a dazzling array of other rainbow-hued tropical fish also establish homesteads, as do groupers, spiny lobsters and prawns. Schools of blue runners, hardtails and other species also arrive, attracting large predators, such as bluefish, cobia, amberjack, king mackerel, pompano, barracuda and an occasional shark. (In addition to mussels, the California rig community includes rockfish, ocean sunfish, bonito, seniori-

(Continued on Page 116)



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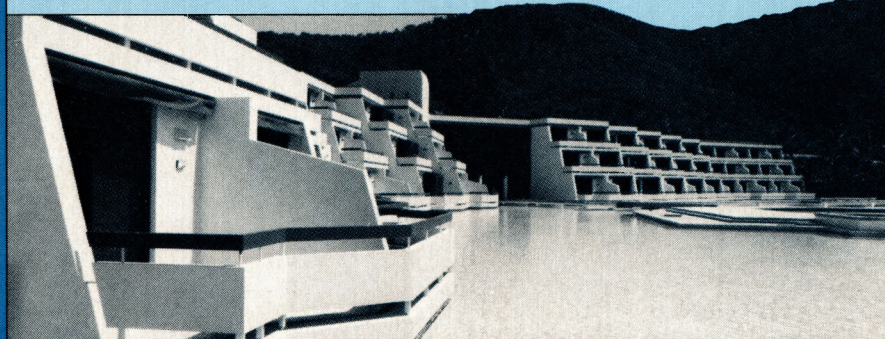


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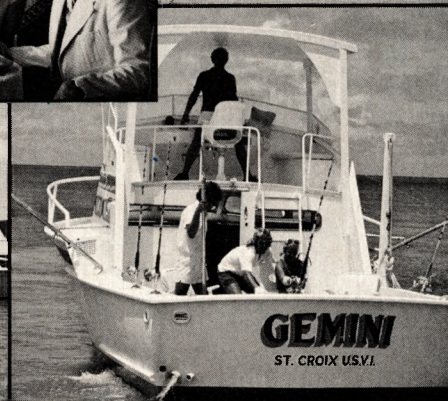
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The only diving resort situated on the Great Barrier Reef, Heron Island offers access to some of the world's finest diving. Full dive facilities include four dive boats and over 60 rental scuba tanks. Only 26 minutes from Gladstone by helicopter, Heron is the home ground of tame moray eels, friendly manta rays, sea turtles (seasonal), and a huge variety of fish and coral. This colorful sea life makes it ideal for underwater photography. Lodging is available to fit most budgets and includes three meals and two dives per day, as well as tanks, weights and air. For information, call (714) 786-0119.

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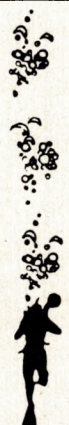
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PLATFORM DIVING

(Continued from Page 112)

tas, ronquil, flounder and scallops, to name but a few. California platforms also boast another major attraction—large colonies of sea lions that feed on the abundant fish and bask on buoy barges and even the platforms themselves.)

It is not surprising, then, that the gulf's steel reefs have become a unique and increasingly important resource for scuba divers, underwater photographers, aquarium owners and biologists studying habitat formation and species succession. Harry Caldwell, owner of Harry's Dive Shop in Metairie, Louisiana, claims the rigs offer some of the best diving in the world.

Caldwell, his son Jeff and daughter Cindy Umbach have been leading dive trips to the rigs for some ten years. Cindy waxes poetic about a 20 foot manta ray's unsuccessful attempts to squeeze inside a platform jacket. She recalls a diver whose spear bounced right off a 200-plus pound grouper—and wonders what kind of ride it would have given that diver over, under, around, through and into the



photo/C.B. Jones

Divers descend below a rig in the gulf.

platform legs, had the spear struck home. Harry will regale listeners for hours with tales of amberjacks, barracuda, bull redfish, seatrout and snapper that are the primary allure for spearfishermen.

As to edibility, pollution controls limited oil spills from platforms to a total of just 672 barrels in 1984, out of more than 467 million barrels produced—compared to 35,000 barrels lost in a single tanker accident the same year. Moreover, most rigs are far from shore in pristine waters that are free from the sediment, bacteria, oils and chemicals so common in near-shore areas.

Many four star restaurants in New Orleans, New York and Chicago serve up redfish, pompano and snapper taken from rigs. Commercial hook and line fishermen come all the way from Florida in search of grouper, snapper and mackerel off Louisiana platforms. Having landed more than 300 pounds of succulent fish in one November afternoon (including a

(Continued on Page 118)

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CARL ROESSLER REPORTS

FOR SEE & SEA TRAVEL

President, See & Sea Travel Service, Inc.
 Author, *The Underwater Wilderness*
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GRAND TOUR OF THE CORAL SEA ABOARD THE REEF EXPLORER

Dateline Australia: Divers who flocked to Australia on bargain trips in the past year have found themselves victimized by a persistent myth - that the Great Barrier Reef is great diving. This myth dates back to our schooldays, and can really foul up a vacation. The truth is that the Great Barrier Reef, plagued as it is by strong currents, turbid waters and powerful seasonal weather, is no more than the gateway to Australia's real diving - the oceanic reefs far out in the Coral Sea.

It is here, 100-200 miles out to sea beyond the outer edge of the Great Barrier Reef, that crystal-clear water laps incendiary reefs filled with blazing color and big animals. The hard truth is that to see the diving that made Australia famous you have to "pay your dues" in time and money. To see the Coral Sea's great diving takes a 12-day cruise which covers over 700 miles! Moreover, the only really great weather is concentrated in October, November and December. Has anyone else told you that?

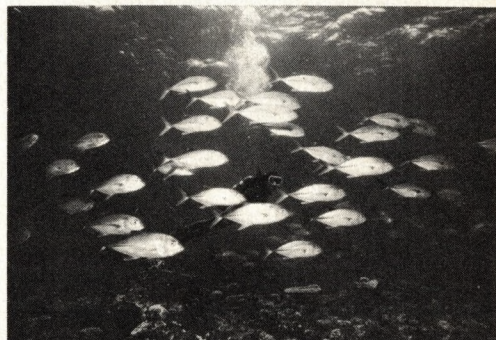
See & Sea's Grand Tours of the Coral Sea have taken divers out to the Coral Sea each Fall since 1972.

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There is alot more, too. The pinacles in the lagoons of Flinders and Marion reefs arise from 200 feet depths to within a few feet of the surface. They are covered with golden corals and colonies of anemonies with clown fish; in the clear waters dance and swirl thousands of radiant tropical reef fish.

If you've heard from divers whose trip to the Great Barrier Reef disappointed them, be assured they were only 200 miles from the greatest diving in the world. Be sure you don't make the same mistake - call or write See & Sea for details on their Grand Tours of the Coral Sea. These 12-day cruises will fulfill your every dream of great diving - giant tuna, massive Napoleon fish, and sensational close-up photography on every reef. Isn't that what you expect from your dream Australia diving adventure?



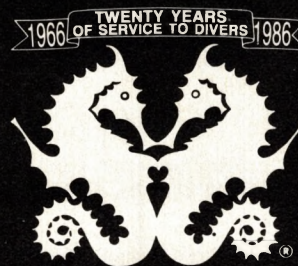
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PLATFORM DIVING

(Continued from Page 116)

scrappy 65 pound king mackerel), I encountered only one problem: finding interesting new ways to cook it all.

If you are an underwater photography buff, you will find countless opportunities. Shell collectors, too, can have a field day. Spiny oysters of unusual size and quality can be found, along with a wide array of other Caribbean specimens.

Virtually any Gulf of Mexico platform is available for fishing or diving—as long as drilling, workover or other operations are not underway, as these can pose hazards to anyone under the platform. Most often platform crews delight in seeing divers since, as anglers themselves during their off hours, they love to get firsthand accounts of what's under the rig and at what depths.

Unfortunately, access to the awesome scenery and tasty seafood beneath the California platforms currently ranges from difficult to impossible. Bomb threats, unusual liability laws and a generally politicized atmosphere over offshore drilling in that state have made companies very reluctant to permit diving, except by special prior arrangement.

A number of Louisiana dive shops now offer charter trips to platforms in deeper waters, where large game fish and tropical species are most abundant. For those who prefer a self-guided experience, Caldwell and the Louisiana Council of Underwater Diving Clubs offer several suggestions for a safe and rewarding tour among the denizens of the rigs:

Tie up to the rig downwind or downcurrent. A drilling derrick in the "up" position usually indicates operations are underway and divers should stay clear. If in doubt, talk to the platform crew. Common courtesy dictates that visiting dive boats yield the right-of-way to the much larger oilpatch crew and work boats.

A cloudy layer near the surface is probably river outflow; dive a little deeper, or go farther from shore and you'll probably encounter clearer water. Generally, stay within the jacket, at least near the surface, to avoid boats, get protection from currents and avoid becoming disoriented in the open water.

A map available from the U.S. Minerals Management Service in New Orleans (Open File Report 83-01) offers more safety tips and is an excellent guide to what fish can be found under various platforms during different times of the year. Finally, check with local dive shops or clubs for further suggestions.

Once you've tasted the adventure and challenge of these steel reefs, they will sound their siren call again and again.

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The *Newberne* capsized at her dock in 1880—years before her sinking.

MARINELAND MYSTERY WRECK

Where Is The Missing
50 lbs. of Silver??

BY PATRICK SMITH

In the clear, shallow waters off the rocky Palos Verdes coast, within sight of one of Southern California's most popular tourist spots, lie the remains of a ship. Her discovery was an accident and her identity, too, a mystery for awhile. She has lain within the sight of thousands over the years, but her concealment by the sea was nearly perfect. She was rediscovered 96 years after her creation and 81 years after her loss.

April of '74 found two of Southern California's most ardent wreck divers, Bob Crowther and Glen de St. Jean, with a weekend and no wreck dive planned. They decided to indulge in a beach dive for rock scallops off the rugged Palos Verdes Peninsula.

About halfway through the dive, with

limits of tasty rock scallops and several large spider crabs in the game bag, sharp-eyed Glen spotted a flash of green among the rocks and sand of the bottom. Swimming down to investigate more closely, his heart began to pound. It was a piece of brass! Glen first signaled Bob, then began to fan sand away. Before Bob could traverse the 20 feet separating them, Glen had turned up several verdigris covered brass spikes, a handful of square brass nails, a small piece of copper sheeting and a large bronze hinge. Bob's eyes were wide when he saw what Glen had discovered. These pieces could mean only one thing—a wreck, and an old one at that!

Glen quickly bagged his finds and Bob signaled they should swim a search pat-

tern through the area. However, after checking their pressure gauges, they postponed their investigation. After scrambling through the surf, they made their way to the bottom of the trail and paused to rest and more closely examine the pieces of wreckage before the long climb back to the car.

The pieces were old—the square nails were almost perfect but the ten inch spikes showed some sand wear and corrosion; the eight inch heavy bronze T-hinge showed obvious signs of fire on one deformed and melted end. Drawing on their extensive wreck diving experience, they were able to make some educated guesses about the wreck (that later proved quite accurate).

The fastenings indicated the ship was

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wood-hulled and probably around 100 years old. The condition of the pieces, considering the shallow, exposed area, seemed to attest that they had been there for some period of time. The melted hinge and the shallow location pointed to either a vessel on fire, which was beached to facilitate rescue attempts, or a stranded vessel, which was burned for the recovery of her metal parts. Plans were made for an extensive search the following day.

At 8:00 am Sunday morning Bob and Glen were once again slipping and sliding down the cliff trail—this time with twin 72s, marker lines and floats.

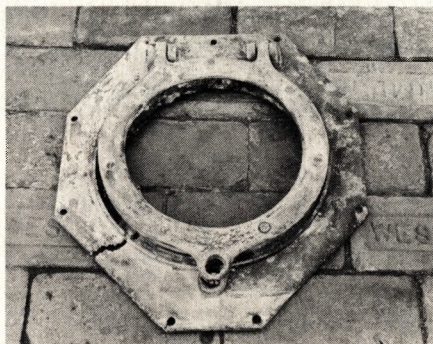
The plan was simple; they would first locate the area the spikes and other pieces had been found in on Saturday and then they would swim patterns around the area marking any wreckage with the floats. Conditions for the dive were perfect—clear sunny skies with a glassy ocean and two foot surf. The water, though spring-time cool, was comfortable in one-quarter inch wetsuits and the visibility ranged up to 40 feet.

While searching for the main body of the wreck, they rediscovered the previous day's spot with little trouble. Bob moved about 30 feet seaward, and within sight of Glen, began a parallel search down the coast.

After a few minutes, Bob noticed a large V-shaped rock and, on closer investigation, he found pieces of copper

sheeting and brass sheeting nails embedded in its side. As he made preparations to mark the spot, he saw Glen send up a marker and signal him to come over. Glen had scored again. As Bob swam up, he began to make out pieces of brass and decomposed iron on the bottom. Glen was trying to smile into his mask without flooding it while fastening an intact wooden-hull porthole to his liftbag.

The spot was marked and the search was continued around the same general area. A short distance away, they came across broken porcelain scattered about



Porthole from the *Newberne*

the seafloor as well as more pieces of brass, wood, copper sheeting and iron. Glen began to work on a small half-circle of brass protruding from an iron matrix, while Bob, a few feet away, found

another porthole and began to move some of the rocks and debris that partly covered it.

A few minutes later, in a flurry of sand, bubbles and iron oxide, Bob pulled his port free. By this time, Glen also had worked his piece out and waved it excitedly. It was a small ornate bracket for a gimbaled lamp, only slightly bent, and complete except for the base.

By this time the pressure gauges were indicating about 400 psi; it was time to go. Even though there were full tanks in the car, they decided to forego another dive that day because of the tortuous cliff trail. They would have to make two trips as it was in order to get the gear and the artifacts to the car.

The following week passed rather quickly, with much time spent cleaning artifacts and researching the ship. The research turned up no promising leads, but the restoration of the artifacts had been more gratifying. The portholes cleaned up nicely, but the prize find had to be the lamp gimbal. After soaking it in a mild acid solution, it was lightly worked with a fine stainless steel brush to remove the remaining oxide and bring out its gold-like color. The support was a delicately carved foliate design—a vine and leaf motif of delicate complexity. It was too bad the base was missing.

During the week Glen and Bob decided
(Continued on Page 130)



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TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY
BY GERI MURPHY



THE GRAND PAVILION

GRAND CAYMAN'S TOUCH OF ELEGANCE



Top: Bob Soto's truck picks up guests at the front entrance to the Grand Pavilion. Grand Pavilion check-in. Above: The center courtyard of the Grand Pavilion has a sun screen, pool, patio bar and open air dining for breakfast and lunch. Convenient drop-front entry from Bob Soto's Holiday Diver. Bob Soto's Diving shop manager Merclida Smith. Left: Grand Pavilion room.

It was 8:00 pm when I emerged from airport customs and hailed a taxi. The driver loaded my dive gear into the trunk and politely asked, "where to?" When I replied, "Grand Pavilion," his eyes brightened and he broke into a broad smile. "That's a nice place," he said.

While "nice place" may be somewhat of an understatement, it is the typical comment made about the hotel by Cayman islanders and visitors alike. The Grand Pavilion is Grand Cayman's newest and most elegant resort, yet it is not stuffy or snobbish.

Built and furnished in the grand style of a refined European hotel, the Grand Pavilion has already become a favorite choice of Hollywood celebrities, government statesmen and corporate executives. Yet this magnificent hotel is equally cordial to visiting scuba divers, sailing buffs and sun lovers.

A stately facade with white columns marks the front of the building complex owned and operated by Transnational Group. It has been a private host facility for many years. When Queen Elizabeth and Prince Philip visited Cayman in 1983 the royal entourage stayed here. In 1985, Transnational decided to join Cayman's tourism boom. The Grand Pavilion opened its doors to the public on December 16.

Settling for nothing less than the best, Transnational appointed Bernard Sarme managing director of the hotel. Sarme, a 24 year veteran of the hotel business, was formerly associated with the Princess in Bermuda, the Emerald Beach in Nassau and several other well known resort facilities. Recently he owned and operated a number of fine restaurants in the

U.S. He is a graduate of L'Ecole Hoteliere in Lausanne, Switzerland.

The hotel is a conservative, but stately white building reminiscent of a Georgian manor. There is ample parking conveniently near the front door.

Once inside, one is immediately struck by the opulence and style of this regal resort. The lobby is lavishly furnished in marble and mirrors, with a 25 foot high ceiling and a staircase leading to the rooms. In place of the normal check-in counter, there is a carved oaken desk in Louis XV style. Service at the Grand Pavilion is very personalized.

The hotel consists of 60 rooms and four luxury suites in a rectangular configuration with a palatial closed-in courtyard. It is just the right size to support first class services yet small enough to avoid a long wait for any service.

The rooms are magnificent, each with more than \$10,000 in furnishings alone. The walls, draperies and bedspread are stylishly color coordinated in creamy tones. Fabrics are French. The furniture is all hand-carved and Louis XV in style. There is a large color TV and a satellite dish provides reception from the U.S. Every room is fully air-conditioned by a noiseless central AC system. Telephones are installed in every room, with convenient link-up to either home or office.

Director Sarme claims the rooms are so lovely that guests spend as much time in them as they do on the beach. For those wanting more sumptuous accommodations, the Grand Pavilion offers four master suites, complete with regency style canopied bed, two color TVs and two telephones.

The Grand Pavilion has an array of facilities. There is an ultra modern conference room that can accommodate up to 250 people. Breakfast and a buffet lunch are served daily in an open air restaurant, just off the courtyard. There is a scuba boutique at the entrance to the courtyard, at which visitors can purchase T-shirts, candy, magazines and dive accessories.

One of the most remarkable attractions of the Grand Pavilion is the courtyard itself. This expansive area is a combination botanical garden, cocktail patio and lounge facility. Guests spend a good deal of time here. Fully enclosed by the hotel structure, the courtyard is totally private. Overhead, a fine mesh screen filters the hard rays of the sun, yet permits just enough light for moderate warmth and diffused illumination. The courtyard is filled with greenery, including small trees, all types of plants and tropical flowers. A few small birds flit from tree to bush as though part of a giant aviary. Several Amazon parrots are housed in bird cages and there is a waterfall in one corner.

The center of the courtyard is dominated by a large freshwater swimming pool that sparkles with clarity. Guests can swim, sun and relax in the peaceful envi-

ronment of a tropical garden.

In the late afternoon (5:00 to 7:00 pm), the courtyard has a festive party atmosphere as the hotel conducts happy hour. Drinks are two for the price of one. A buffet of tasty cocktail appetizers is set up. And, guests are entertained by the musical renditions of Chuck & Barrie, a talented young duo who play everything from calypso to jazz to country.

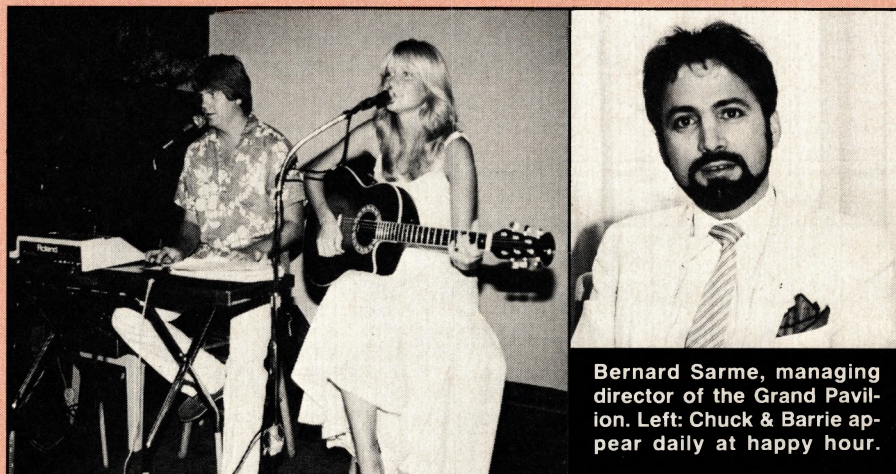
The crown jewel of Grand Pavilion is Le Diplomat, a formal gourmet restaurant just off the hotel lobby. This impressive dining room is truly a piece of European refinement transplanted to the Caribbean. The restaurant is exquisitely furnished with polished woods, crystal chandeliers and Queen Anne furniture. Place settings are sterling silver and made-to-order Wedgewood plates. All of the waiters are Europeans skilled at their craft. Service is prompt and extremely courteous. Dining at Le Diplomat is more than just a good meal, it is an experience.

The food at Le Diplomat is precisely what you would expect of such a prestigious restaurant. The seven page menu is

tel is across the road from Seven Mile Beach, it does maintain a Beach Club complete with 1,000 foot frontage on this world famous strand. Watersports include parasailing, waterskiing, windsurfing, Hobie Cat sailing, jet ski rides and Sunfish sailing. Complimentary sailing lessons are provided with sailboat rentals. The Beach Club is just a few minutes' walk from the hotel or there is a complimentary shuttle bus service available for Grand Pavilion guests.

One of the major watersports available at the Grand Pavilion is, of course, scuba diving. Bob Soto's Diving Ltd. has a dive shop right on the premises. Hotel guests can stop in at any time of the day and make arrangements for trips, gear rentals, U/W camera rentals or a variety of other diving services.

Guests are picked up every morning in front of the lobby by the Bob Soto's shuttle trucks and taken for a two minute ride to the beach. The Soto's fleet of seven boats board their passengers right on the beach and reach the dive sites within 10 to 15 minutes.



Bernard Sarme, managing director of the Grand Pavilion. Left: Chuck & Barrie appear daily at happy hour.

written in French with English translations. The wine list includes 150 different choices from a well stocked cellar.

At least 12 appetizers are served, ranging from ballotine of duckling to lobster crepes in a white wine sauce. Soup choices include chilled vichyssoise or cream of crabmeat with champagne cognac. The main courses are a galaxy of culinary masterpieces including such specialties as breast of chicken in a pepper cream sauce, steak Diane, sauteed lobster with whiskey sauce or Chateaubriand. These are feasts fit for royalty.

Incidentally, the room service menu is by far the best on Cayman. Although a bit more limited in selection, room service meals are prepared in the kitchen of Le Diplomat and are equally delicious.

Grand Pavilion guests have access to a wide variety of recreational facilities including tennis courts, an 18 hole golf course and squash courts. While the ho-

The morning trip is a two tank dive to two different sites. The first is on one of Grand Cayman's many spectacular drop-offs such as Trinity Caves, Big Tunnel, The Cathedral, Orange Canyon or Sand Chute. The second dive is a medium depth coral reef such as Aquarium, Spanish Anchor, Angelfish Reef or the *Oro Verde*. One tank afternoon dives and night dives are also available.

From the description of this elegant resort hotel, you might think the Grand Pavilion is enormously expensive. It can be, should you choose to stay in a master suite and dine at Le Diplomat every night. However, the Grand Pavilion is surprisingly affordable if you shop wisely. Intent on competing with other major Cayman hotels, the Grand Pavilion and Bob Soto's Diving Ltd. have designed an attractively priced package called the Grand Escape Dive Package. It is available in three different lengths that vary from

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GRAND PAVILION

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The package includes room, continental breakfast, a two tank boat dive every full day of the package, one night dive or afternoon dive, a diver's T-shirt, complimentary cocktail party and free tennis court privileges. The cost of the package is comparable to those of many Cayman hotels and remains in effect through December 14.

If you want to give yourself and your family a real vacation treat, spoil yourself with a stay at the Grand Pavilion. For more information and Grand Escape Package prices, contact: Reservation Systems Inc., 6 East 46th St., New York, NY 10017. Telephone U.S. toll free (800) 223-1588 or NY (212) 661-4540. You can also call direct to the Grand Pavilion, (809) 947-4666.

MARINA DEL MAR

(Continued from Page 95)

in this premier Key Largo hot spot. The menu includes steaks, ribs, seafood and sandwiches. The lounge specializes in frozen tropical drinks such as Rum Runners and Piña Coladas.

There are 42 slips in the marina, rental sail and power boats, as well as charter fishing boats. There is usually slip space available for divers who wish to bring their own boats, but it is wise to reserve it in advance just as you would a room. There are lighted tennis courts; a meeting room/classroom for small conventions and scuba or underwater photo instruction; bicycle and moped rentals; glass-bottom boat tours; and a tropical clothing boutique to further enhance the self-contained aspect of the resort.

Ocean Divers occupies a new 7,000 square foot building along the same canal frontage. The second floor of the edifice houses a spacious retail center; offices and classroom; the regulator repair facility; and Doc's Galley, a restaurant. The ground floor is occupied by a massive compressor system with a 100 cfm unit, a 70 cfm backup and 30,000 cubic feet of air storage. There are also scuba equipment rentals; a secure gear storage area for guests of Marina Del Mar; a marine store; and the newest addition, a recompression chamber used for advanced diving courses and diving medical seminars.

The diving and hyperbaric medical training programs are operated under the auspices of Hyperbarics International and conducted by expert Dick Rutkowski. This is the only hyperbaric training facility open to the public in the United States and features a new 60 inch diameter chamber. Physicians seeking Continuing Medical Education credits are able to

achieve accreditation in a resort setting with courses covering diving accident management; mixed gas diving concepts; physics and physiology; pathophysiology; recompression chamber operation and treatment timetables; and the physiological implications of gas laws for divers and medical personnel.

The primary thrust of the Ocean Divers' business has always been in transporting divers to the spectacular coral reefs of John Pennekamp State Park. These fringing reefs are at least four miles, and most of the best six miles, from the mainland. Therefore, diving Pennekamp means boat diving, and to that end Ocean Divers provides twice daily dive excursions to select areas of the marine preserve.

In addition to resort courses and full open water scuba certifications, Ocean Divers also offers specialty instruction packages including: underwater photography taught by Stephen Frink; deep diving; wreck diving; boat diving; night diving; search and recovery; underwater hunting and collecting; reef ecology; and even an underwater flight school utilizing Tekna scooters. All of these specialties receive PADI certification. Ocean Divers is also the only facility in the Florida Keys to offer the PADI Instructor Development Courses. This means the candidate can receive scuba instruction to the instructor, even the master instructor, level. In an effort to prepare instructors for their future roles in resort management, there is a supplemental program dealing with hands-on resort operations.

In addition to the marina location, Ocean Divers also maintains a retail outlet on U.S. 1 at Mile Marker 102.5, which is shared with Stephen Frink Photographic. Ocean Divers uses this location for booking dive excursions as well as selling dive equipment, T-shirts, postcards and miscellaneous accessories. Stephen Frink Photographic specializes in underwater photography. To that end it maintains the Florida Keys' most complete selection of underwater cameras and strobes for rent or sale. E-6 film is processed daily (Ektachrome and Fujichrome) and underwater photo instruction is offered. A new aspect of the business involves underwater video, with both custom videos of dive tours and video rentals offered. Commercial underwater photography and stock photo sales are also available.

For further information or reservations for the Ocean Divers/Marina Del Mar packages please call Ocean Divers at (800) 451-1113 or, within Florida, at (305) 451-1113. The national toll free reservation number for Marina Del Mar is (800) 451-DIVE and the Florida number is (800) 253-DIVE. Local and international callers should phone (305) 451-4107. Mail inquiries may be addressed to Marina Del Mar, P.O. Box 1050, Key Largo, Florida 33037 or Ocean Divers, P.O. Box 1113, Key Largo, Florida 33037.

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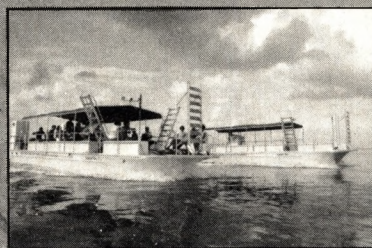
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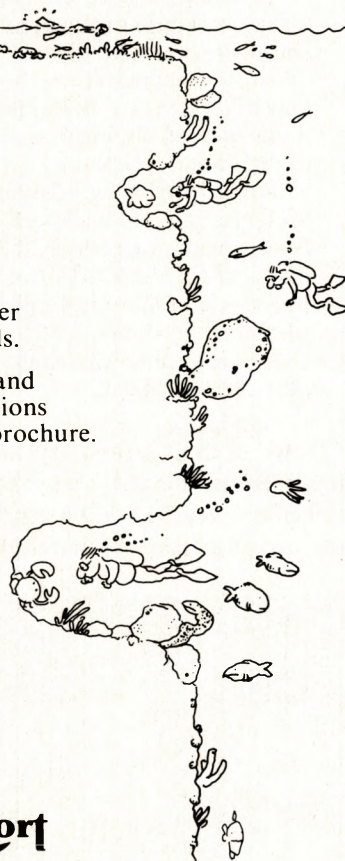
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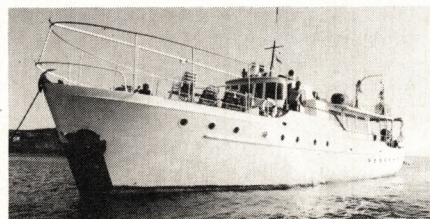
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La Mer Diving Seafari, Inc. of New York is offering special Red Sea programs in June, July and August. The 13 day trips include eight days diving from



the 85 foot *Fantasea*, two nights in Jerusalem, transfers, tours and tour escort, and meals.

The program will begin and end in Israel and the boat will visit such sites as Ras Muhammed, Gordon Reef, Thomas Reef, Jackson Reef, The Temple, Ras Umsid and the wreck of the *Dunraven*.

For more information contact La Mer Diving Seafari, Inc., 823 United Nations Plaza, Suite 810, New York, NY 10017; (800) DIVE-NOW or in New York (212) 599-0886.

DIVI 800 NUMBER

Divi Hotels has a new toll free number: (800) 367-DIVI. Reservations and information for the Divi Divi Beach Hotel, Tamarijn Beach Hotel and Dutch Village Luxury Apartments on Aruba; St. James Beach Resort, Southwinds Beach Hotel and Peter Hughes Dive Barbados on Barbados; Flamingo Beach Hotel and Casino, Club Flamingo and Peter Hughes Dive Bonaire on Bonaire; Tiara Beach Hotel and Peter Hughes Dive Tiara on Cayman Brac; and Peter Hughes Underwater Curacao can be obtained by calling this number in the U.S. and Canada, or call (607) 277-DIVI.

DIVE/SNORKEL GUIDE TO HAWAII

A guide to scuba diving and snorkeling in Hawaii has recently been published by Destination Hawaii, a non-profit association of 30 dive and snorkel operations statewide. The 24 page color guide was produced in cooperation with University of Hawaii Sea Grant Extension.

More than 40 of Hawaii's top diving and snorkeling sites, averaging 10 per island/county, are pinpointed on color maps and highlighted in detailed descriptions. Further details on how to enjoy Hawaii's diving and snorkeling opportunities are also provided. Each Destination Hawaii member is listed individually along with the services provided.

The guide was developed by Destination Hawaii for sale in member shops and to the dive and travel industry throughout the United States and Canada. Single

copies are available for \$3, postage and handling included.

For more information about the 30 members of Destination Hawaii and to order the Dive and Snorkel Guide, write to Destination Hawaii, P.O. Box 90295, Honolulu, HI 96835. ✉

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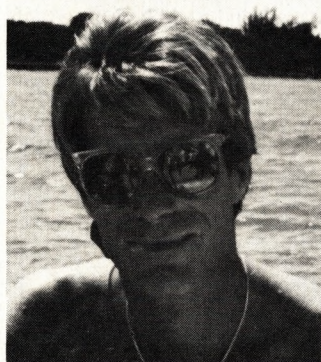
Scuba Safari, Grand Cayman's newest dive operation, is offering one week dive packages. These include private guesthouse for eight days/seven nights, five two tank dives and a night dive (using a Tekna vehicle) and airport transfers.

Scuba Safari also offers personalized underwater and topside videos. For more information call Jeff Kingstad (809) 949-3742 or write to P.O. Box 2029, Grand Cayman, BWI. ✉

SPANISH COVE

PCP Vacation Resorts, Inc. of Miami, Florida is now handling marketing and sales for Spanish Cove Resort on Grand Cayman. For reservations contact PCP Vacation Resorts, Inc., 11774 North Kendall Drive, Miami, FL 33186 or call (305) 274-3956 or (800) 231-4610.

Scott Roe has been appointed director



of dive operations at Spanish Cove. He has been with the organization since 1983 and has served as training director.

Russel Pearson is Spanish Cove's assistant operations manager and Collin Pearson is the photo pro. Scotty Schriener is the resort's new director of training. ✉

AQUA ADVENTURES NOW CI WHOLESALER

Aqua Adventures, the scuba tour operator, has been appointed an official regional wholesaler by the Cayman Island Hotel Association. It is featuring diving packages to 20 different hotels and condominiums on Grand Cayman and Cayman Brac. In addition to featuring scuba packages to the Cayman Islands, Aqua Adventures offers dive plans to the Bahamas and other islands in the Caribbean.

For free brochures and reservations contact Aqua Adventures, Inc., 318 Lexington Avenue, New York, NY 10016; (212) 686-6210. ✉

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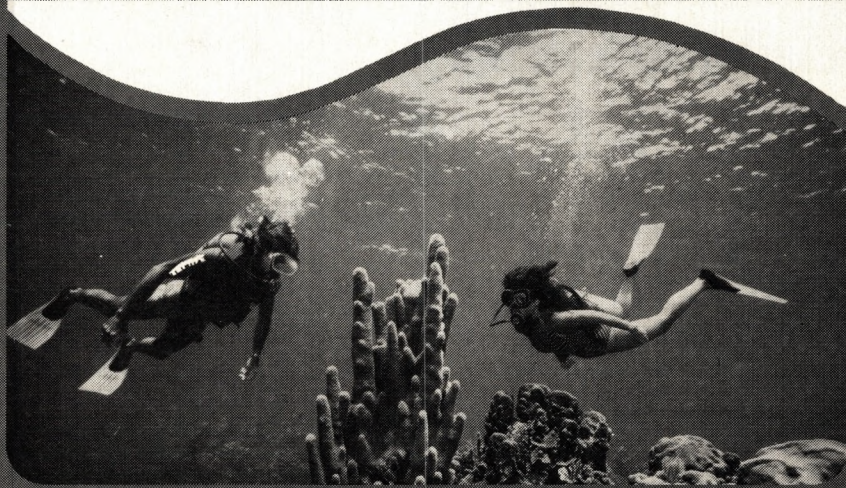
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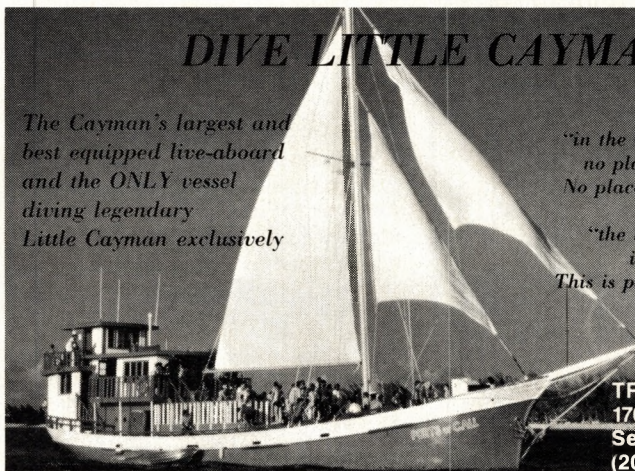
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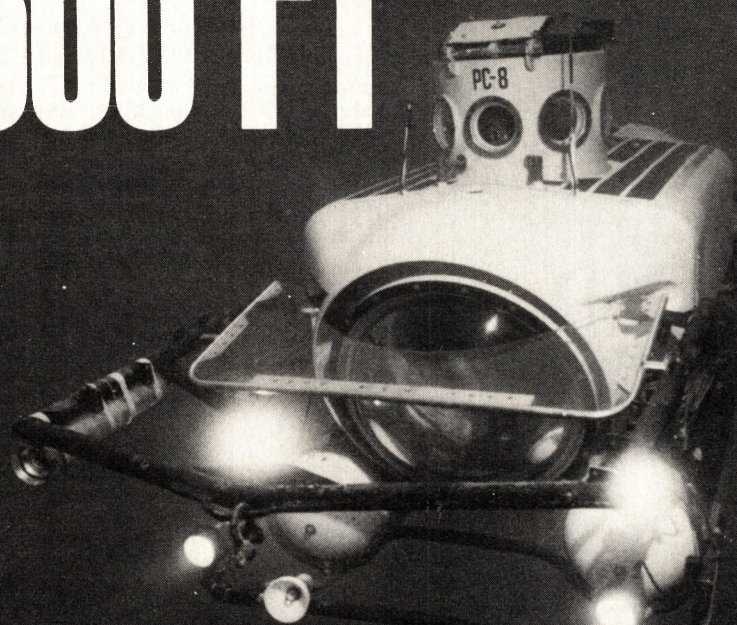
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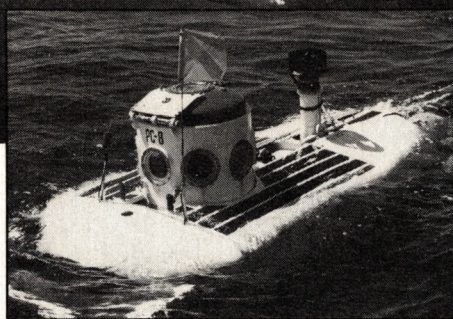
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Commodore Cruise Lines is a Miami based company that offers a unique program for the scuba diver and snorkeler aboard its two ships, the M/S *Boheme* and the M/S *Caribe I*.

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The M/S *Caribe I* leaves Miami every Saturday and visits Cap Haitien, San Juan, St. Thomas and Puerto Plata in the Dominican Republic. Special snorkel and diving packages as well as U/W photography programs are also available.

For brochures or more information write to Commodore Cruise Line Aquanaut Watersports, 241 East Commercial Boulevard, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida 33334 or call toll free (800) 327-8223; in Florida (800) 432-8894.

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Through exclusive arrangements between Sea International and Treasure Salvors, Mel Fisher has agreed to allow a limited number of people to dive on the 1622 treasure fleet site off Key West, Florida. This area has been off limits to all divers since the discovery of the fabulous riches strewn along the seafloor.

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MARINELAND WRECK

(Continued from Page 121)

the cliff trail was an obstacle that should be avoided if possible. Missing a step wearing twin 72s was a treacherous and most unpleasant possibility. They contacted Pat Gibson, the owner of a 24 foot boat, and a wreck diver of the first water. Pat jumped at the chance to dive a "new" old wreck! He suggested Larry Pierson as his buddy.

The next Sunday, the quartet of divers, plus Pat's wife, Carla, and son, Troy, arrived at the wreck site. The divers soon followed the anchor over the side into 30 feet of crystal clear water. Both Glen and Bob had spotted and marked portholes on the previous weekend, so as Pat's welcome to the wreck they decided to "donate" one to him. Of course, this donation was on an as-is basis; "as-is" happened to mean it was under a 400 pound boulder and partly buried in iron oxide. That was fine with Pat—with great gusto, he went right to work. Meanwhile, Glen was chipping his porthole out with a four pound sledge hammer and chisel. Both teams of divers were soon obscured by billowing black clouds of decomposed iron. The pounding and limited visibility soon drove Larry to a somewhat cleaner and quieter area nearby where he uncovered several perfect brass spikes.

There was a brief pause in the fray, for fresh tanks, then they went back to the wreck. Since Bob was assisting Pat on his port, and Glen had the situation well in hand with his, Larry decided to search shoreward of the main site in an area that hadn't been heavily investigated.

That this shoreward area was virgin territory became obvious to Larry within a few minutes of search. Almost immediately he began swimming across large structural pieces of iron and then he found what appeared to be a firebox of the type used with coal-fired steam engines. This investigation also disclosed the outline of a plaque or name plate mounted on one crushed side of the firebox, nearly hidden by a moderate covering of growth.

The plaque was in fairly good shape except for a portion of the upper right-hand corner that had probably been broken off when the firebox had been crushed. After a careful cleaning, they began to make out the words on the plate: *Shell Iron, Pottstown & Gla... Iron Co's Pottstown, PA. St'd 4 Firebox D. Hillman & Son, Tenn. Built by Risdon Iron Works, San Francisco, Cal. 1878*

It was a fantastic find and the envy was plain to see on all faces. It was excellent in another aspect as well; it provided new clues to the identity of the mystery wreck and established positively that the wrecked vessel was power driven.

The final dive of the day was intriguing, even after the excitement of the firebox plaque discovery. Of course, more hull spikes and sheeting nails were recovered along with a large brass bearing, several pulley block sheaves and some portions of rope and rigging. Also recovered were several oriental coins, some unbroken (but unmarked) plates and a wine bottle, intact even to having its cork in place. By holding the dark green, long-necked bottle to the light, they could see the fluid inside. It appeared to have the consistency of thin mud and a tentative sniff of the sulphurous cork rapidly removed any thoughts of sampling the brew within. One other item was recovered; Bob found the base to Glen's lamp gimbal. That artifact could now be completed.

After this day's diving, the need to identify the mystery wreck became the immediate goal of the group. Vows were sworn that the midnight oil would burn until the name of this long forgotten vessel was brought to light.

After several weeks of evenings spent combing sundry maritime reference



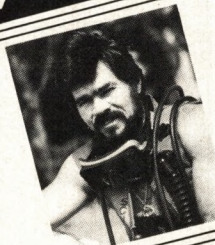
Bottles from the *Newberne*

works, one of the group members discovered what looked like a hot possibility. An article in a spring 1884 newspaper described the burning of the 205 foot North Pacific Coast Railroad Company ferryboat *Saucelito*. Though the vessel was completely destroyed to the waterline, there was some speculation by the press that the burned hulk might be towed south as a barge, then continue in that same position or, perhaps, be rebuilt.

There were several facts that did, indeed, seem to indicate this might be the Marineland mystery wreck. First, size and age seemed consistent with what had been found. The obvious evidence of the fire on board was also supported by the *Saucelito* hypothesis, as well as the presence of the oriental coins (they had been identified as Chinese) on the wreck site. These could logically be associated with the large Chinese population of San Francisco of the 1880s. Further research disclosed that the *Saucelito* had been a single ended ferry, specially built for the North Pacific Coast R.R. Company in New York. After completion she was totally disassembled and her entire 692 tons were shipped west to San Francisco

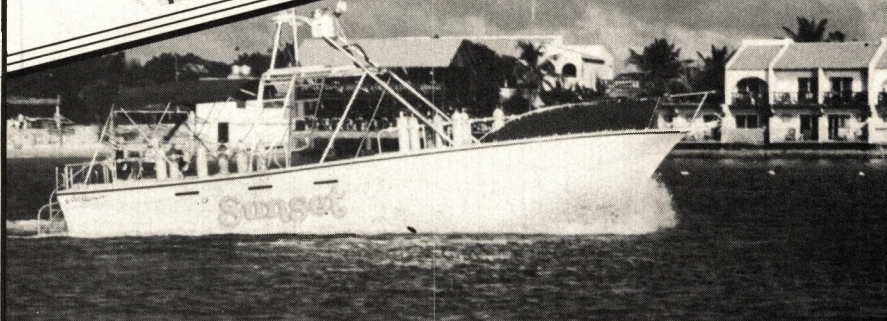
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MARINELAND WRECK

on 120 railroad cars. Contemporary accounts showed the *Saucelito* had the honor of carrying president Rutherford B. Hayes from San Francisco for the first visit of a U.S. president to the Mare Island Naval Shipyard in September of 1880.

The group's hopes were dashed when research to confirm the burned *Saucelito*'s trip south, proved the opposite; the *Saucelito* never left San Francisco.

Hard on the heels of the *Saucelito* disappointment came a new excitement about another ship, the *Newberne*. This time there was no doubt; the mystery wreck was the *Newberne*. The October 15, 1893, early morning edition of the Los Angeles Times told the story in large type across the front page: *The steamer Newberne wrecked, Ran ashore in a fog at Point Vincente (sic), Passengers and crew safely landed, vessel miles out of her course, bullion saved.*

The article told of the ill-fated ship's departure from Guaymas, Mexico for San Francisco for the Pacific Coast Steamship Company. She carried 26 passen-



Newberne skylight bracket and brass nails

gers, 10 crew and a cargo consisting of oranges, tanbark, bales of hides, one-quarter million dollars in silver bars and a deck cargo of 80 live sea turtles.

The passengers interviewed by the Times reporter told of a pleasant voyage with calm seas and a courteous crew. When Captain Von Helm was interviewed, he indicated the only problem encountered on the voyage, until striking the rocks near Pt. Vicente, was the discovery of a compass deviation error when the *Newberne* was just south of San Diego. But he assured reporters that he had felt confident about adjustments to the instrument, so much so, that the vessel's speed was not reduced when she encountered heavy fog just before slamming into the rocky shore. The article went on to state that although it had been assumed that all the bullion had been recovered, a count of the silver bars in San Pedro showed that two were unaccounted for. There was more than passing comment about the fact that though

the vessel had encountered no rough weather and had suffered no mechanical breakdown, she was more than 24 hours behind schedule. It was also pointed out that this was the third vessel lost under Captain Von Helm's command and despite his popularity among passengers and crew, it seemed likely that the *Newberne* would be the captain's last ship.

With the mystery wreck finally named, it was easy to find her history prior to her loss and a most interesting and exciting history it turned out to be. Built in New York as the screw steamer *United States* in 1862, she was purchased by the U.S. Navy from Wakeman, Dimon & Co., and commissioned at the New York Navy Yard in June of 1863. Though designated as a supply ship attached to the North Atlantic Blockading Squadron, whose usual duty was the essential but tedious job of carrying officers, seamen, mail and supplies from northern ports to and from the ships of her squadron, she did, on two occasions, pursue and destroy Confederate blockade runners. After the war, she was transferred to the War Department in Washington; but shortly afterward, she was sold to the Pacific Coast Steamship Company. Brought to the West Coast via Cape Horn, she shuttled freight and passengers until her demise on the rocky Pa-



Wreck diver's "treasure"

los Verdes coast.

Bob, Glen and the rest of the group were really excited. It isn't often that West Coast divers get the opportunity to dive a naval vessel of Civil War vintage. There remained only two small mysteries to be cleared up. First, there was the obvious evidence of fire on the wreck. This puzzle was solved by a little more research through the local newspaper archives. These explained that after all the equipment that could be reached was salvaged, the ship was burned so her metal fastenings and fittings might be salvaged as well.

The last mystery of the *Newberne* has yet to be resolved—what happened to those two missing 25 pound silver bars? Glen, Bob and most people who learn the story of the *Newberne* feel that in that period before Social Security, perhaps those two bars became severance pay for the good captain. On the other hand, maybe, just maybe, they are sitting on the bottom, waiting. 

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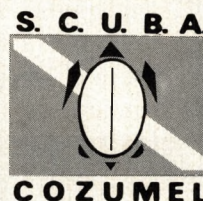
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BELIZE

(Continued from Page 93)

grouper nearly five feet long! Not just once, but at four different anchorages, he appeared to share our diving.

At another site we discovered a huge green moray standing erect like some huge, swaying blade of grass. Now, this was not some paid performer in front of a hotel that gets fed every day. No, this was a genuine animal in the wild exhibiting fearless curiosity even when surrounded by divers.

At the stupendous drop-off near Half-Moon Cay we had crystal clear water, which made our deeper dives like space-walks, while *Isla Mia* literally gleamed in the sun above us. Halfway through the dive, a friendly barracuda came and hovered between me and another photographer, giving each of us a jaundiced eye and a curled lip to contemplate.

One of Belize's greatest thrills is the Blue Hole. While many groups skip this dive to pack in another full day of reef photography, those who try it find the Blue Hole an awesome experience. Hovering amid colossal stalactites at 130-140 feet, a diver is awed by the scale of nature's handicrafts.

It wasn't the giant grouper, or the eel, or the curious barracuda, or the ray, or even the Blue Hole that made the trip a spectacular success for me. On the contrary, it was the sum total of all these and many other experiences amid untouched corals that took me back to the olden days. This can't possibly last, of course. It is too good to escape development.

Until then, the grand old lady *Isla Mia* will offer you a floating hotel with great food, air-conditioning, nice hot showers and a caring crew. For the past seven years See & Sea Travel and *Isla Mia* have hosted divers for a step back into the past. Wouldn't you like to see it before this kind of diving recedes into history?

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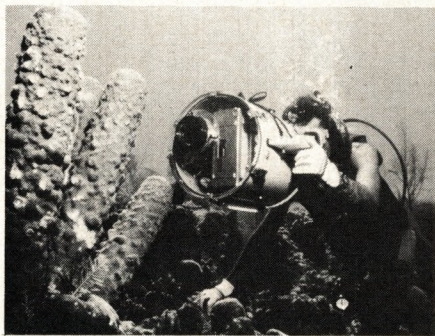
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comes complete with titles and music. According to Fisheye owner, Martin J. Sutton, the wreck of the *Oro Verde* has



so far been the most popular video location, though he stresses that videos can be shot on any of Cayman's dive sites.

"Divers are directed throughout the dive, to ensure the most professional result possible," explained Sutton. It is also possible for Fisheye to shoot groups diving with other dive operations on the island. For full details of this and all other Fisheye services, including full dive packages, contact Fisheye Photographic Services, P.O. Box 2123, Grand Cayman BWI. ✉

CASTELLO/ DIVE PARADISE

Dive Paradise, Cozumel Island, Mexico has added Jose "Pico" Castello to its family of instructors and divemasters. Pico has been diving for more than 25 years, has a bachelors degree in marine



biology and is fluent in both Spanish and English. Having spent four years as director of Mexico's National School of Commercial Diving, he is now an FMAS instructor trainer, CMAS instructor and is completing his PADI training.

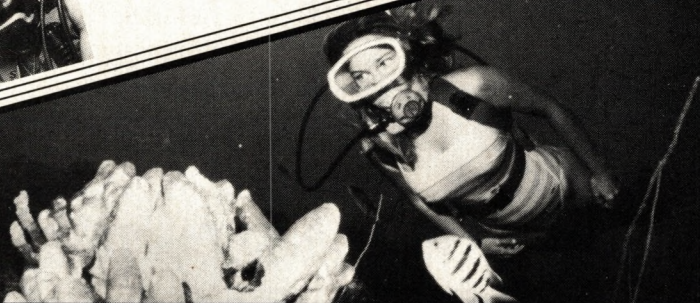
Joining the Dive Paradise team as head instructor, Pico will be offering specialty certifications in ocean, surf, boat and cave diving as well as underwater hunting, search and recovery, salvage and decompression diving. Knowledgeable in all aspects of diving, Pico has authored more than 200 articles for Mexico's leading travel and dive publications.

For more information, write him at P.O. Box 222, Cozumel, Q. Roo 77600 Mexico or call Bob Goddess, the stateside rep for Dive Paradise at (206) 441-3483. ✉

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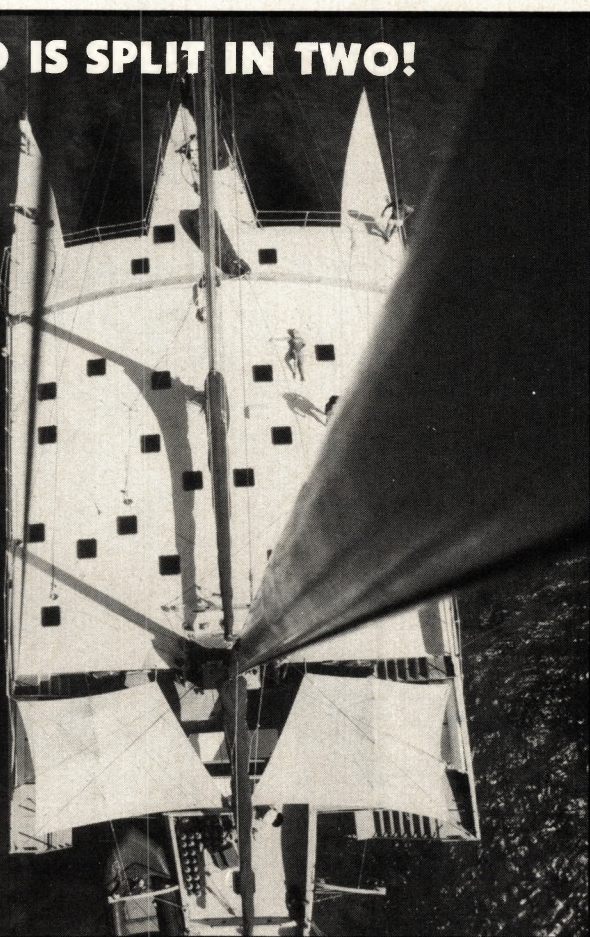
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16 aboard *Cayman Aggressor*; October 4-19 (Northern Coral Sea) aboard the *Reef Explorer*.

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ALL-CAYMAN PACKAGE

The Cayman Islander Hotel/Bob Soto's Diving and Brac Reef Beach Resort/Brac Aquatics have joined forces to introduce the only dive package that lets you dive the sites of Grand Cayman, Cayman Brac and Little Cayman.

This package is offered through December 14 and includes roundtrip air fare on Cayman Airways from Houston or Miami to Grand Cayman and Cayman Brac. Also included is a one to two tank morning boat dive per day, unlimited use of tanks for offshore diving, one night dive per stay, full breakfast daily, boat trip to Little Cayman and much more.

For information contact the Cayman Islander Hotel/Brac Reef Beach Resort reservation office, toll free: Florida (800) 233-8880 or U.S. (800) 327-3835.

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Posada Del Sol is a dedicated dive resort with an emphasis on comfort, convenience and fine dining. It offers coral reefs and wall diving just offshore.

Tan Sahsa is the premier airline serving the Bay Islands of Honduras. In recognition of the increased traffic to Guanaja, the home of Posada Del Sol, Tan Sahsa has introduced direct flights from La Ceiba several times weekly. By connecting so conveniently in La Ceiba, a whole range of simplified travel from major U.S. gateway cities such as Miami, Houston and New Orleans is now available.

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The most intimate of all the Divi Hotels, Tiara Beach Hotel consists of 30 spacious, air-conditioned beachfront rooms. Each unit features hand crafted Haitian furniture, two double beds, private bath and a balcony or patio just steps away from a beautiful white sand beach.

Further information is available through recognized travel agents or Divi Hotels Executive Office, toll free (800) 367-DIVI in the U.S. and Canada.

BRAC REEF TWO FOR ONE

The Brac Reef Beach Resort on Cayman Brac will offer Double Dive Giveaways in June, July and September. This special will be for departures from Miami, Tampa and Houston. The first diver of a pair will pay the special roundtrip air fare and discounted hotel and diving for a desired length of stay and the second diver goes free: free air fare, hotel and diving. For more information call: Florida (800) 233-8880 or U.S. (800) 327-3835.

**DEGROOT/EXCURSIONES
AKUMAL**

Johanna DeGroot has joined Excursiones Akumal Dive Center as one of the senior PADI instructors. DeGroot, who holds Dutch and Canadian citizenship, was certified in 1979. She has been a dive instructor in the Cayes in Belize, with Lucky Divers in Israel, Aquamarine Diving Centre in Egypt and aboard a chartered dive boat in the Red Sea. Prior to these positions, she taught diving at the University of Ottawa in Ontario, Canada.

Excursiones Akumal Dive Center, with more than 12 years of activity in the Mexican Caribbean, is about an hour's drive south of the Cancun airport.

**HABITAT SHOOTOUT
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Cap'n Don's Habitat on Bonaire, Netherlands Antilles is offering a seven night package for divers to participate in the Nikonos Shootout from May 31 to June 7. The price includes cottage accommodations on a four person basis, six guided photo dives by boat, six breakfasts, transfers, taxes, tips and service charges. For groups of 11, the leader goes free and groups of 16 get two persons free.

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Across The Currents

We All Cast The Nets

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY
BY HOWARD HALL

On a calm, foggy night in October, hundreds of blue sharks, thresher sharks, swordfish and other great fish swam north and south on courses that would take them between California's Anacapa and Santa Cruz Islands. They were among the ocean's elite predators, often ranging thousands of miles through the trackless nocturnal void of open sea. But unlike countless other nights when these animals followed routes through the Channel Islands, a trap had been set.

That night our radar revealed 16 fishermen had set their nets before the four mile pass between the two islands. Although fishermen have been using nets



A whale, killed by a fishing net

since before recorded history, these nets were new and different. Each was one mile long and nearly 100 feet high. Unlike most gill nets, these were not anchored to the bottom but were adrift in the open sea. They are called drift gill nets and, since 1978 when they were introduced to California, they have proven highly efficient in the capture of two prized food fishes: the swordfish and the thresher shark. The introduction of this new fishing technology has added fuel to a raging controversy among environmentalists, sportfishermen and commercial fishermen over the use of all gill nets to exploit California's resources.

Dawn was only three hours away. We searched the darkness just a few yards off our bow for the buoy that marked this end of the net. One mile distant, the deck

lights of the fishing boat were just visible through the lifting fog. Finally, Tom Campbell located the buoy with his dive light and David Weiss and I slipped into the water. David would record the numbers and species of fish we found in the net and I would film them. The footage would be used in a documentary David is producing entitled *Ocean of Dreams*. Tom would follow as a safety diver to help should one of us become ensnared. When I reached the buoy I shined my light down the line that tethered it to the net. The line disappeared into the darkness.

I've never felt entirely comfortable dropping into ink black water in the open ocean with the bottom thousands of feet below. With my camera, movie lights and batteries, I felt a bit out of control; the weight of my equipment pulled me down at a slow but accelerating velocity. I felt as if I might continue to fall even after pressing the inflation button on my buoyancy jacket. But, at 30 feet the beam of my light encountered the top of the net, giving my eyes and mind a welcome object to focus on. I leveled off at 60 feet and, after being joined by Tom and David, began swimming along the net.

Since the net was drifting free it hadn't maintained a straight rectangular configuration. It was convoluted: bending, twisting and even folding back upon itself. With only the ten foot beams of our lights to see by, it was easy to get lost within the folds or find oneself separated from the surface by seemingly endless panels. If we touched the net, it would grasp us like a spider web.

Once David turned away from a fold in the net and the buckle of his right fin brushed the mesh and caught. Instinctively, he pulled to free himself, but in an environment influenced little by gravity, this only succeeded in pulling him farther into the net. Tom came quickly to David's aid and, after a few minutes of very careful work, David was free. Alone, he might have drowned.

Something white reflected the beam of my light ahead. With a few more strokes of my fins I could see it was a blue shark. Three yards farther there was another blue shark and yet another a few yards beyond that. David would count 32 blue sharks in the net that night and we swam less than half its length.

Blue sharks have no commercial value. Drift nets are set for swordfish and thresher sharks. But, unfortunately, the nets kill non-commercial species just as efficiently as they kill commercial ones. Most blue sharks caught in the nets die of suffocation and exhaustion during the night. But those that survive to be pulled in at dawn are often killed by the fishermen to facilitate their removal from the net and to ensure they don't foul the net in the future.

Descending past the 15th blue shark, the beam of my light found a swordfish. It was a magnificent creature nearly 12

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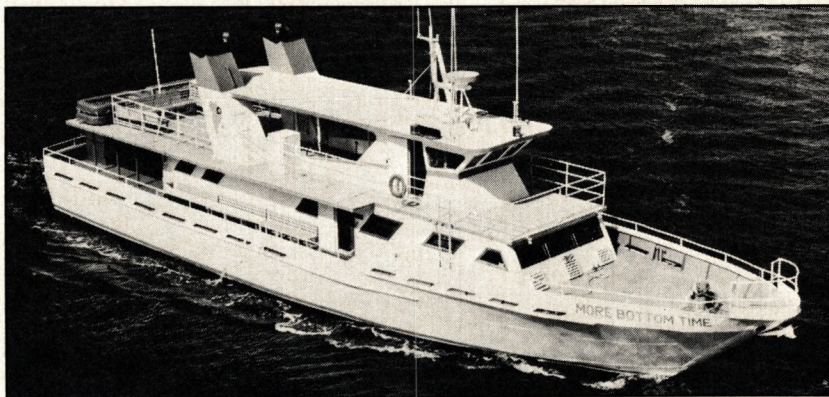
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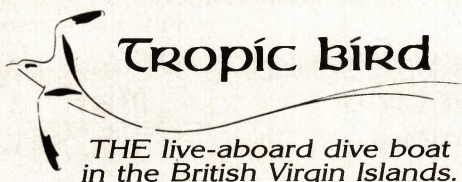
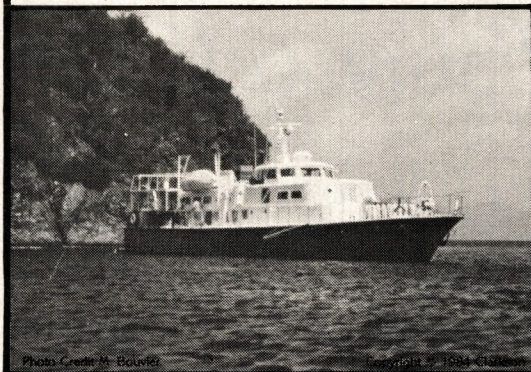
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GILL NET

feet in length, perhaps weighing 1,000 pounds. Its sword was nearly five feet long and had edges as sharp as a scythe. It had been a powerful and intelligent fish and I tried to imagine it accelerating through the darkness trailing a green comet's tail of bioluminescence; rushing into a school of mackerel, using the sword to strike them down before turning to eat them.

But like blue sharks and other pelagic fish, swordfish are incapable of swimming backward. In the open ocean these animals have no natural need for this ability. So upon encountering the net, the swordfish rushed forward against its



Drift gill nets are an efficient method of capturing prize species like swordfish.

bonds, slashing its unseen foe with its sword and expending its dying efforts driving itself deeper and deeper into the mesh until it was hopelessly ensnared.

As I filmed the swordfish, I could feel Tom's hand on my shoulder and I could tell something was making him nervous. After finishing the sequence, I turned to see what was bothering him. He pointed the beam of his flashlight into the black water behind us and made a pantomime of biting jaws with his hand. I immediately understood the problem. The net was not just a passive trap. Once the first caught animals began to struggle against the mesh, the net began to actively attract prey. In the darkness Tom was seeing sharks. Fortunately, operating an underwater movie camera demands full concentration, leaving me little time to worry about the possibility of being eaten. I left that problem to Tom's skill as a safety diver and to his good judgement.

Before ascending we encountered a variety of other species including two hammerhead sharks, three thresher sharks, a sea lion and a manta ray. I think the sea lion bothered David and Tom most of all. People naturally feel a greater kinship with a warm blooded animal than with the cold blooded fish. But it was the sight of a manta ray trying to fly free of the web that really struck me. It was the first manta ray I had ever seen in California waters, but in the Sea of Cortez one had once permitted and even encouraged me to ride its back as it circled the *Marisla*

Seamount. It had been my finest hour underwater. So, I was deeply saddened to see this creature so ensnared.

On that night, the fisherman did well. His net produced four swordfish and six thresher sharks. But for every fish that went into his ice hold, many more were thrown back into the sea. At dawn, as the net was being pulled, we watched from beneath the fishing boat as blue sharks rained down, followed by the sea lion and the last lifeless glide of the manta ray as it spiraled toward the ocean floor.

For those of us who dive and enjoy the submarine environment for its aesthetic value, there is something dreadfully wrong with this kind of wasteful killing. But defining the problem and placing blame is not easy. Superficially it would seem that the fishermen are obvious villains. But the fishermen may be the last to blame. They are trapped by the laws of economics. They are obliged to use the most efficient means available of catching fish. If they favor more primitive fishing methods, they can't compete and may go bankrupt, forfeiting their boats and the freedom of life on the sea.

Until 1978 when the drift gill net was introduced, swordfish were taken by harpoon. This was a highly selective form of fishing and ensured that only swordfish were taken and only in adult sizes. But when the drift net was introduced, harpooners began catching fewer fish, the price of swordfish went down owing to the increased supply and the harpooners (who fervently hated the nets) were forced to give up their way of life.

Tom Brown is a professional fisherman who made his living hunting swordfish with a harpoon. He remembers many years when he killed more than 200 fish. In 1978, the year the drift net was introduced in California, Brown had a good season. The following year, however, he took less than ten percent of his average and bitterly held the drift nets responsible. In 1983 less than 500 of the 20,000 swordfish taken in California were taken by harpooners: The rest were taken by drift nets.

Today Brown goes to sea with a drift net instead of a harpoon. You might ask yourself what you would have done when faced with the loss of your boat and livelihood. Some fishermen walked away from a lifestyle passed down through generations. Others went to the nets.

There are two issues at question over the use of gill nets. One regards the health of marine life populations. According to Dennis Bedford of the California Department of Fish and Game (DFG), there are now more than 230 permits in California allowing the use of drift nets. During any good night at the peak of the season there could be more than 100 miles of net cast in the paths of California's open ocean marine wildlife. Most of these animals are predators that occupy the top of the food chain, exist in more

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GILL NET

limited numbers than lower species and may procreate slowly.

Bedford believes that the drift net fishery may already have had a significant impact on the thresher shark population. The DFG's current study of drift net catch statistics suggests thresher numbers are rapidly declining owing to the effectiveness of the nets and the animal's slow reproductive rates. But gaining an understanding of the population dynamics of a pelagic species is not easy. Yearly changes in the water temperatures and current patterns greatly influence the



The problem with these nets is they destroy other animals than the species sought. Like this sea lion, they blunder into the nets and become entangled.

movements of open ocean predators. It is difficult to prove that a drop in the catch of a species is the result of overfishing when it could be said that the population is simply elsewhere that year. Studying these populations takes years and is very expensive. But Rob Collins, another DFG official, says the California Department of Fish and Game has only enough funds to respond to crisis situations. "We have enough money to fight fires, but not enough to prevent them."

One of the issues is moral. Can the incidental death of non-commercial species on such a large scale be justified? Is it wrong to kill dolphins in nets but all right to kill tens of thousands of blue sharks? Should we be concerned with the decimation of a fish population if the species is not yet endangered and the fish has no commercial value?

The drift net is but one of many kinds of gill nets being used along the California coast. Some are anchored in deep water for rockfish, others are set in shal-

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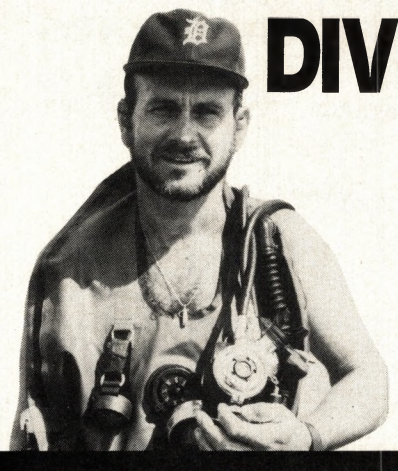
low water for halibut or white seabass. The fisherman sets his net with a specific fish in mind. But there is usually an "incidental" catch of unwanted animals that may include seals, dolphins, diving birds and even whales. During one expedition, I dived eight inshore (anchored) nets. The fishermen had been very unlucky. In all eight nets I saw a total of three marketable fish. But the incidental species had been even less lucky. In one net alone I saw nearly 100 bat rays, yet not one marketable fish. When the fishing boat left for better fishing grounds the bat rays had been returned to the sea: lifeless effigies of creatures once capable of U/W flight.

In recent years I have dived in the waters of Japan and the Philippines and have witnessed the pathetic effects of overfishing coastal waters. We are very fortunate in California. Although the giant black seabass, the white seabass and several other beautiful species I remember seeing often two decades ago are essentially absent from these waters today, the environment remains bountiful and healthy. Yet with the astronomical growth in the demand for seafood and the proliferation of gill nets and other advanced fishing technologies, I fear I may live to see the day when our marine wilderness is a lifeless shadow of its former majesty.

Two bills recently passed in the state legislature are steps in the right direction. Assembly Bill 307 places a moratorium on the issuing of general use gill net permits and AB 2199 places seasonal restrictions on areas fished by drift gill nets. But in 1981 there were only 341 general use gill net permits in existence. Today, with the moratorium, there are 900. And, ten years ago there was no such thing as a drift gill net.

I congratulate our legislators and the DFG for these efforts. But, I doubt these measures will prove sufficient to prevent the economics of the seafood industry from further damaging the California marine wilderness. Every night, thousands of dead and valueless creatures will be dropped over the side of gill net boats to decay on the ocean floor—the casualties of supply and demand.

Hanging over the abyss that night, staring into the nearly lifeless eye of the great swordfish, I felt anger. I wanted to hold somebody responsible for the destruction of this great fish, the manta ray, the sea lion and the dozens of graceful blue sharks the net had caught. But while swimming back to our boat, I realized that some, if not most of the responsibility must certainly be placed on the shoulders of we who sit down to a meal of swordfish, seabass, halibut or thresher shark. We must remember that these animals are not grown on a farm or raised on a ranch. When eating seafood, most of the time we are eating wildlife. And, in doing so, we ourselves participate in the casting of the net. 🐟



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BOTTLES FROM THE SEA

Part II: Examples

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY
 BY WILLIAM B. GILLIES

This is the second segment of a two part series on bottle diving. The first part appeared in the April issue of SDM.

The year 1659: Richard Cromwell was Lord Protector of England and the restoration of the monarchy was to take place the following year. The plague and the great fire of London were six and seven years in the future, respectively. Phillip IV occupied the throne of Spain while Louis XIV ruled France. The *Eagle*, a ship carrying colonists from Britain to what were then the American colonies, ran up on the North East Pointer Breakers at Bermuda and was lost.

During work at the wreck site a moderate number of small case-type bottles



An old bottle can be restored from pieces if it can be identified and a model is available (preferably from the same site).

were found, many with the corks still in place. Unfortunately, none reached the surface intact despite the utmost care taken with excavation. These bottles were deeply buried in fine sediment, their sides had been very thin and the glass was probably soda-lime. Although this is the worst possible combination of conditions, some large pieces, principally the top portions and bases, were brought up. They proved to be in very poor condition and those left untreated crumbled to dust.

One day a classic shaft and globe bottle was recovered from the gray mud beneath one of the cannons. As it was picked up, one side collapsed, but the neck, lip and base survived in pieces that could be fitted together. The remaining

glass looked good initially, but soon began to show corrosion layers. It was at first treated with acrylic spray, but this was not sufficient to prevent further deterioration and the layers began to separate. At this stage the decision was made to coat it with polyester resin and at the same time to fill in the missing side using fiberglass cloth and colored resin. It stands today as the only example of a bottle from that ship.

The *True Love* out of Bristol lost her rudder and ended up on a Bermudian reef in 1670. Her artifacts fell into crevices, were lightly covered with sediments and overgrown by the reef. Bottles excavated from this site had a thick weathering crust but with sound glass beneath. The reason they were in better condition is attributed to the type of substrate and/or composition of the glass. In all, two "onion" bottles were retrieved whole, while two others that had been intact were broken during excavation. Treatment consisted of removing corrosion layers with 0.2 percent sulphuric acid, acidified potassium dichromate solution (long used by chemists for removing stubborn stains from laboratory glassware) and in particularly obstinate cases, dilute (0.5 percent) hydrofluoric acid. Take note that the latter is an extremely

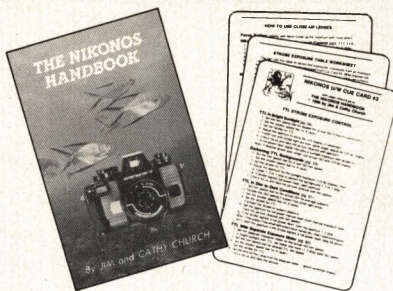


After the pieces are glued together, the missing parts are constructed of special materials to match the proper curvature.

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One of the newly broken bottles bore a seal with a crest that has yet to be identified. This required special treatment because it was essential that a minimum of surface glass be lost. The pieces were desiccated with alcohol, coated on both sides with polyester resin and reassembled. It was then given a further coating of resin to help hold it together. In the end it was possible to restore both of the freshly broken bottles and to reconstruct another from pieces using the others as a guide.

A solitary detached lip and neck proved to have broken down completely into multiple layers similar to those on the *Eagle*. Unfortunately, the type of sub-



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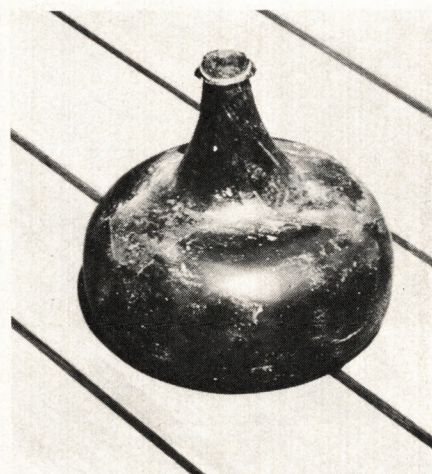
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BOTTLES

strate that held it could not be established. The piece was in danger of disintegrating before resin could be applied, so it was desiccated with alcohol, then treated with soluble nylon (2.0 percent) in alcohol. This held it together until it became dry enough to apply resin.

A different situation was found on an unidentified wreck of about 1760. This site consisted of a single cannon and lots of heavy ship's timbers in association with pieces of wooden barrels and empty packing cases. Only one complete bottle and the upper part of another were found. They were rust colored and opaque but the surfaces were smooth when these items came out of the silt. Soon afterward they began to craze and flake in large, thick pieces. Previous to this, 18th century bottles recovered from wrecks had shown only superficial surface peeling. Those of earlier date had corrosion of varying degrees of severity but in thin layers. This condition was therefore unexpected and nearly resulted in their loss. They were hastily desiccated and coated inside and out with resin. It seems probable that this is a case of a particularly



If care was taken in the restoration, the finished product will make a fine addition to a collection: Here a 1715 onion bottle.

corrosive milieu built up and maintained by the large amount of organic material that was present.

HOW LONG WERE THEY USED?

It is difficult to estimate how long individual bottles were kept in use from the evidence gathered from shipwrecks. Most sites yield such a small number that there is insufficient data for a meaningful analysis. The few that carried quantities of bottles in their cargos seem to have ones with similar characteristics and their age therefore falls within a narrow range. A wreck in the Southwest has given up a large number of bottles, all of which can be dated 1790—1800. Several years ago a solitary seal with a small fragment of the bottle attached was recovered from this

site. It bore the initials T.V. and the date 1776. There is a difference of between 14 and 24 years here, but this may have been an isolated case where someone had his favorite bottle with him. Alternatively, it could have been a commemorative piece made long after the event. Another site yielded only four bottles, but these show in beautiful sequence the evolution of the English wine and spirit bottle from 1715 to 1740. The time span here is 25 years, but there are indications that at least one of these belonged to the ship's surgeon and, as such, is likely to have been in use for an unusually extended period. It seems logical to assume that when bottles were rare and expensive and liquor was purchased in a cask, they were decanters and were kept and reused. But, with the practice of maturing wines in the bottle and shipping beverages in these containers, they began to have a steadily diminishing life span.

CONCLUSION

Glass has held a fascination for humans from the time primitive men gathered obsidian in volcanic regions to fashion superior cutting tools. Fearsome lightning bolts striking the earth would occasionally form glass plugs called fulgurites. Possibly because of this association with powerful natural phenomena, these items were thought to possess magical properties. When technology advanced enough to enable men to manufacture it for themselves, the fiery transformation of such mundane materials as sand, soda and lime into a beautiful, brilliant and transparent substance was regarded as something mystical. The earliest articles of manufactured glass were therefore highly prized and used chiefly for adornment. The invention of the blow pipe revolutionized the industry and for the first time allowed production of more utilitarian articles in quantity.

The Egyptians knew glass as did the Greeks and the Romans, but it seems to have disappeared from Europe, at least in bottle form, during the Dark Ages and did not reappear until the glass houses in England began to produce the shaft and globe type vessels in quantity around the middle of the 17th century. Containers made of glass therefore began to find general acceptance during a period that roughly coincided with the colonization of North America. Ships trading between Europe and the New World carried increasing numbers of bottles.

Wine and spirit bottles underwent an evolution dictated by the drinking habits and customs. Because of this they can be dated and have thus become a valuable archaeological tool. Already, in the closing decades of the 20th century, we can see the eclipse of the glass bottle and the rise of the plastic container. Archaeologists of the future will surely be dealing with lots of this material and will study it for much the same reasons we now study glass.

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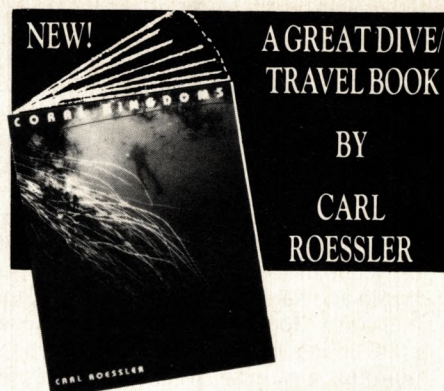
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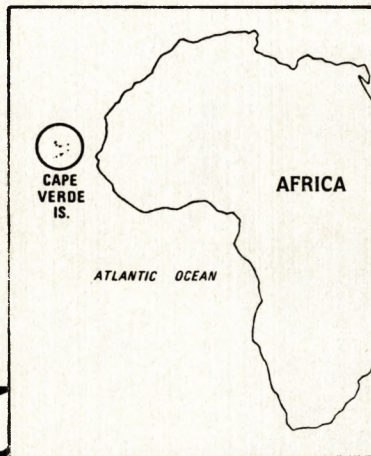
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DISCOVER CAPE VERDE

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One of the most controversial issues within the sport of diving has always been spearfishing. During the birth of diving, the speargun played an important part in the evolution of underwater sports. In the '50s, "gogglers," as they were called, with or without scuba gear, explored the underwater environment, basically unfamiliar with the marine life. The docile and harmless nature of marine animals was, for the most part, undiscovered during the first few years. Consequently, a number of these creatures were dispatched with spearguns. The pages of early SKIN DIVER Magazines were filled with pictures of divers who did battle with these underwater denizens. Stingrays, wolf-eels, sharks and huge turtles were all proudly held aloft by their conquerors along with a word about the battle that had occurred.

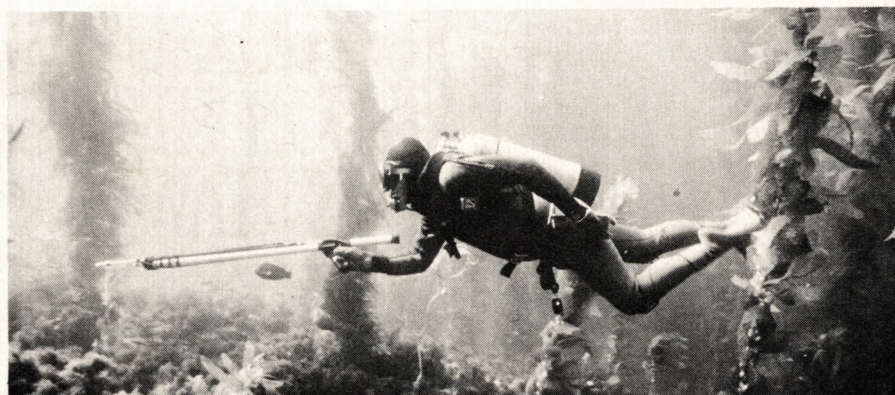
Fortunately, after years of sharing the underwater environment we have come to understand that the vast majority of inhabitants in the ocean are very gentle. Today's divers and spearfishermen are not interested in dragging a stingray up on the beach for glory but they are certainly interested in seafood dinners. Therein lies the trouble.

A number of diving authorities with considerable influence have been discouraging spearfishing for years. Their reasons are that the fish populations have been seriously depleted. No one really

knows why the fish aren't as abundant in diving areas as they were 20 years ago. And, no one really knows what effect the speargun has had on the numbers of reef fish. The lack of fish may simply mean they have moved to where bubble blowers don't roam. Sort of like us not going back to Central Park after getting mugged once or twice. We already know that in the deeper areas of the Bahamas and Caribbean there are large numbers of fish. Boats with deep reels routinely catch large quantities of grouper and

snapper. Could these fish have gotten weary of being "mugged" and gone into deeper water because of the spearfishing pressure? Although there might be a few more fish around in shallower water had the speargun never been invented, no one can deny that line fishing is a much more efficient method of gathering seafood. But, to a diver, spearfishing is more fun than line fishing.

A more important issue in the controversy over spearfishing is the man rather than the fish. Spearfishing in many quar-



photo/Bonnie J. Cardone

SPEARFISHING

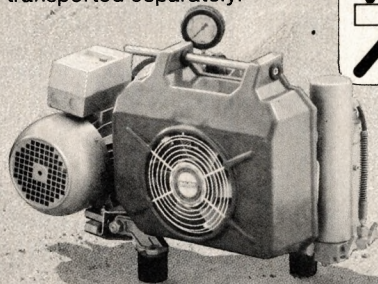
Nine Rules To Hunt By

BY HERB VAN DE POL

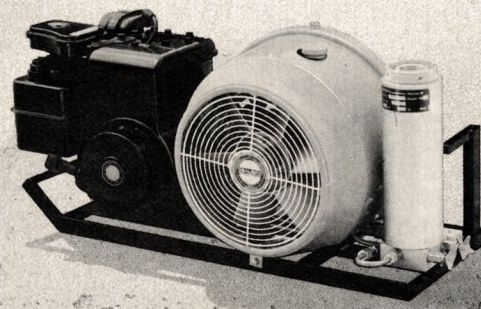
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ters has endured a bad name and more often than not it is well deserved. Very little *good* instruction is actually available for spearfishing yet spearguns are sold by the hundreds everyday. Spearfishing purists cringe when they see spearguns being used with scuba, but the truth is that the larger fish are now in deeper water and not many divers take the time to develop free diving skills to 60-70 feet. Spearfishing with scuba is more acceptable than it was 10 or 15 years ago but the real reasons for spearfishing's poor image are largely owing to the conduct of the underwater hunters themselves.

With no training, the typical diver/spearfisherman learns how to use his equipment by aiming at fish and shooting. This results in dozens or more fish being wounded until the hunter perfects his aim, range and follow-through.

The following are a few suggestions for the diver who is considering buying a speargun; the diver who owns one and is not quite sure what to do with it; and also the experienced spearman who wants to make sure he is following the rules.

1. Before undertaking spearfishing underwater, you must first be a confident, comfortable diver with at least 25 to 50 dives under your weightbelt. This is because shooting a fish can get rough; a 20 pound fish, pound-for-pound, is one of the strongest fighting machines around. Your mask can get knocked off, you can

get tangled in gear and you can quickly lose contact with a buddy while concentrating on bagging a fish.

2. Never forget that spearfishing can be dangerous. Think about it: You enter an alien environment with life support equipment, your vision and mobility limited. You are hunting prey but you are not the only hunter down there. All the more reason for you to be a confident diver with good knowledge of buoyancy control and equipment operation.

3. Before you spend money on a speargun, ask a lot of questions. Ask the people who spearfish. Spearguns come in all shapes and sizes and each has limitations. Find out if the best one for your area is a big, long range gun or if a shorter model will suffice. There is no sense lugging a seven foot rifle around when the target is small school snappers.

4. Become an expert on fish. Study some good books and learn which species are edible. Learn to identify fish on sight and know what type of fish to expect if you dive a certain area. Nothing is more irritating to an experienced spearfisherman than a diver who surfaces with a fish saying, "Can you eat this?" An expert spearman can identify fish just by seeing a silhouette. If you don't know what you're shooting, don't—it's as simple as that.

5. Get plenty of practice with your speargun. Before actually shooting at fish

you need to know what the effective range of your gun is. Making shots beyond it does two things: It makes for lots of maimed fish and it also makes good "the one that got away" stories. Weight a couple of gallon plastic milk cartons in shallow water and shoot at them until you understand how to aim and how your gun will shoot. Remember, you get tremendous magnification and your depth perception is altered greatly underwater. Understand how big objects actually are when seen through a mask. This will prevent you from spearing embarrassingly small, aquarium sized fish.

6. Use the right equipment for the right fish. A common error on the part of the novice underwater hunter is to assume his/her speargun can handle anything that comes along. As I stated before, fish are all muscle and they are powerful. Shooting a 30 pound black grouper with inadequate equipment will usually result in the loss of your gear, and the fish will later die in a hole somewhere with a shaft embedded in it. Big fish require big shafts, strong shock cords and strong bands for penetration; pass them by if there is any doubt that your gun is a little shy on power and size.

7. Use the 90 percent rule. When I teach spearfishing to advanced divers I always insist they do not pull the trigger unless they feel there is a 90 percent
(Continued on Page 170)

from BAUER

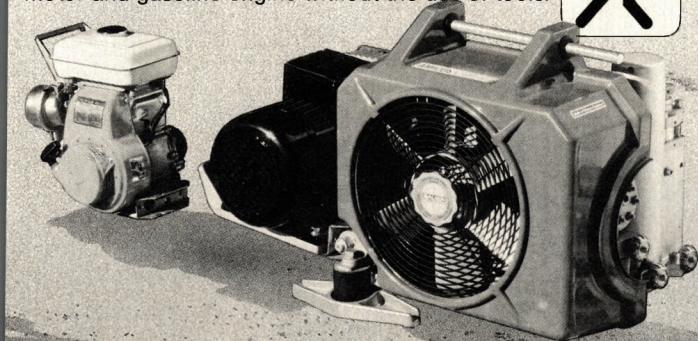
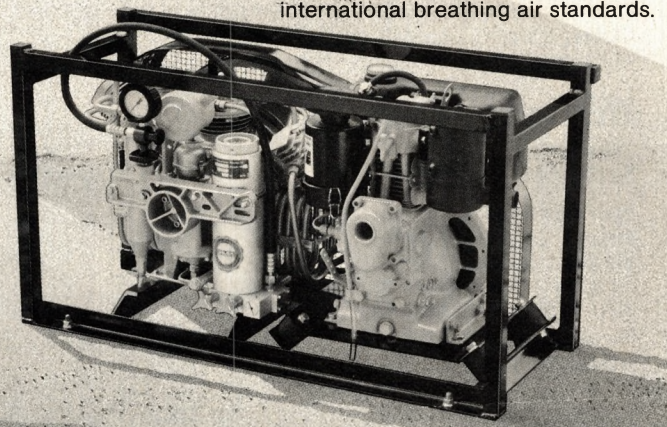
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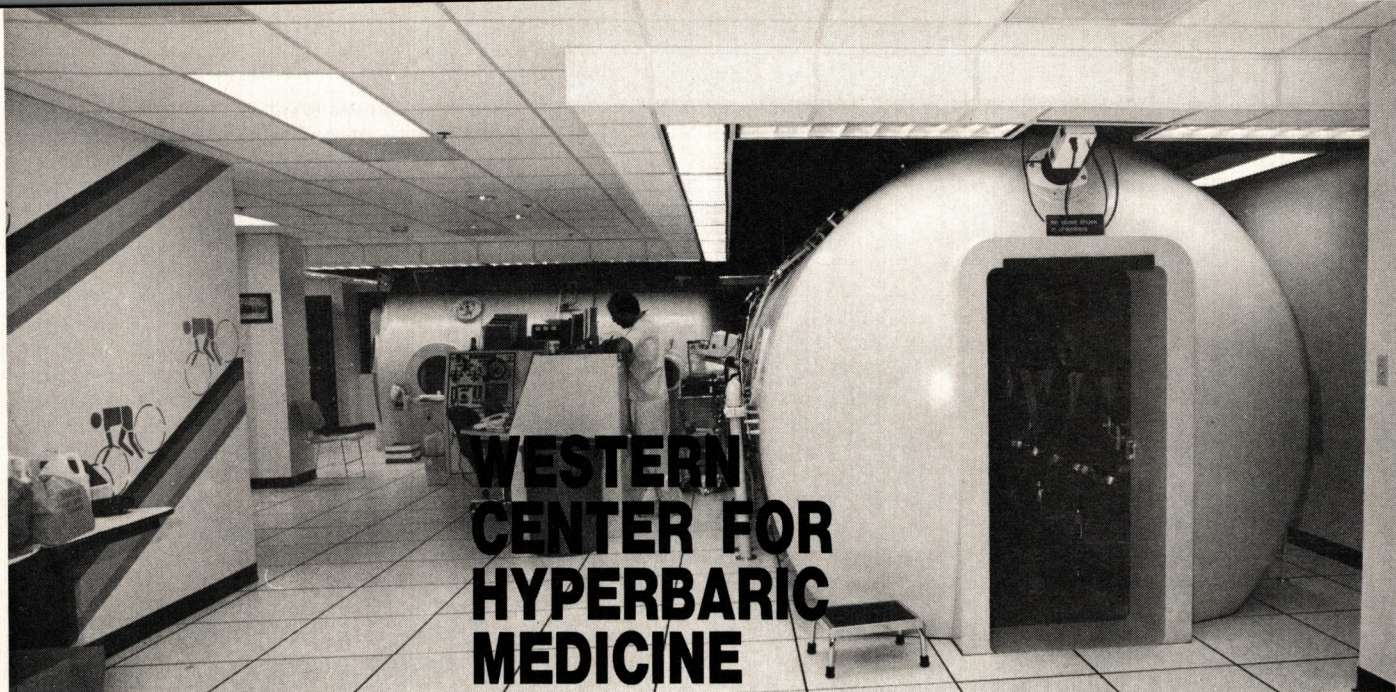
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At first, the ascent seemed successful.

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**TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY
BY GEORGE COZENS**

However, upon reaching the swim step of the boat, one diver—we'll call him Ken—complained of a numbness in his feet. Soon after, he noticed his fingers going numb. An alert boat crew recognized the symptoms. Air embolism! They reacted

quickly. Divers were recalled from the water and the boat radioed ahead for assistance while speeding to the Isthmus. From there, Ken was transferred to a lifeguard truck, which carried him to the recompression chamber at the Marine Biology Lab. He entered the chamber and started treatment immediately. The time was close to 10:00 am.

Those of us witnessing the incident had conflicting emotions. We were overjoyed

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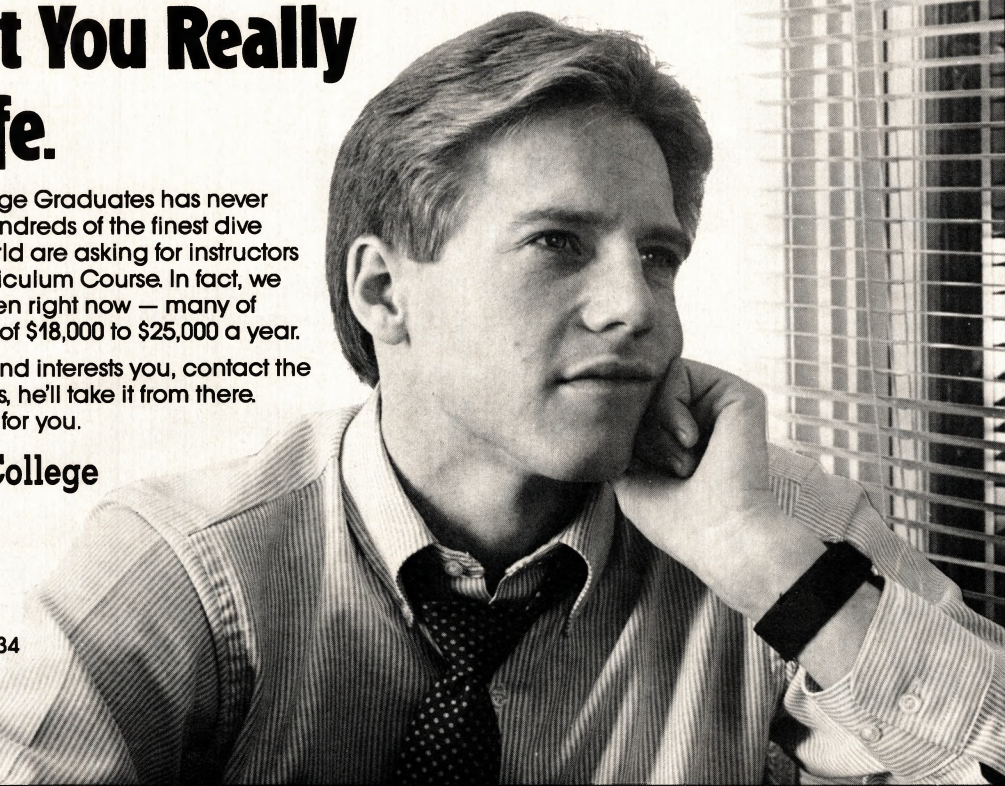
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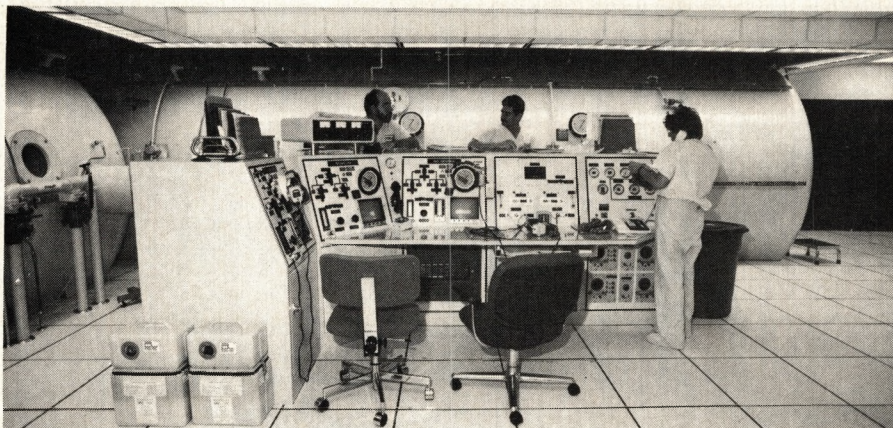


at having completed the difficult instructor's course conducted by the L.A. County Underwater Instructors Association, but were, at the same time, depressed that the sport we loved so much could also have its bad moments. Just a few feet from us, in the cold, steel tank, was the body of a young diver—the victim of one of those moments. Would he survive? And, if he did, would he be left with paralysis or brain damage?

The day wore on as the hyperbaric treatment continued. Gradually, Ken started to improve. The numbness slowly disappeared from his extremities. By nightfall he was without symptoms. By all appearances Ken was cured. Only a follow-up examination was indicated. Another life saved, or at least spared a permanent handicap. What a marvelous thing, the recompression chamber.

Divers in Southern California waters have been fortunate to have available the Catalina recompression chamber.

Recently, this area has been blessed with another chamber. In May 1985, the Northridge Hospital Medical Center opened the Western Center for Hyperbaric Medicine. In Northridge, California, it now offers the largest, multiplace chamber in the Western United States. The nine foot diameter, L-shaped chamber is 32 feet long on one arm and 15 feet on the other. It consists of three independently pressurized compartments. The



The multiplace chamber is L-shaped, 32 feet long on one arm and 15 feet on the other.

smallest is the ten foot lock, at the heel of the L. Normally used to transfer medical personnel between compartments and to the outside, it can be pressed into hyperbaric treatment for two additional patients when needed. The mid-size compartment is generally used for critical care and can accommodate six patients. The main compartment is the largest and can handle up to 12 patients.

As you can well imagine, the great volume of this hyperbaric system requires an enormous amount of air when in operation. Two large non-lubricated compressors, each with a capacity of 224 cubic feet per minute, provide air at about 100 psi. Because of the high smog content, a

specially designed, \$120,000 filtration system is used to clean up the air prior to its admission into the chambers. An impressive number of compressed gas cylinders, containing oxygen, nitrogen and mixtures of both, supply the breathing gases used in treatment.

A critical eye has been given to safety. To reduce the fire hazard, no high voltage is used inside the chamber—all electrical equipment inside is powered by low voltage. "Light pipes" conduct light through the hull from external fixtures. The critical care chamber has a large viewing port, so that scopes and other medical equipment, which require high voltage, can be monitored from the inside. In case of fire

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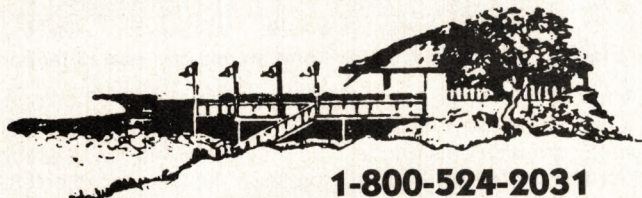


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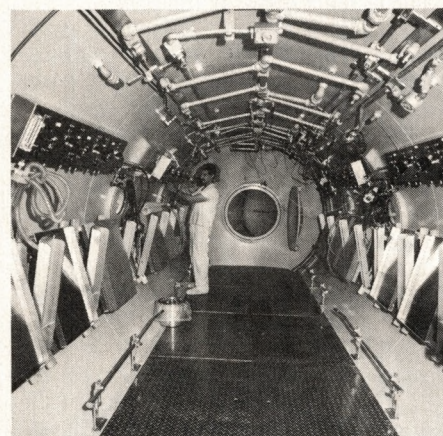
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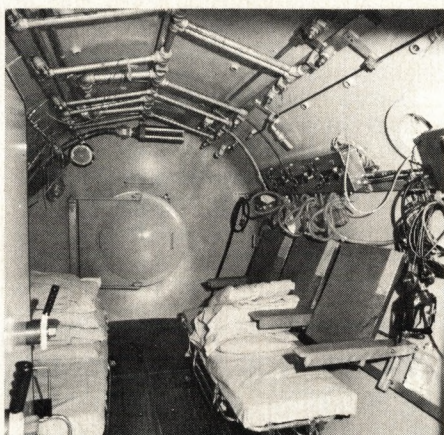
The main chamber can handle 12 patients.

manually and has enough reserve capacity to make a complete Table 6 treatment: maximum "depth" of 60 feet, total duration of four and three-quarter hours. And, should medicine or small instruments be needed inside a chamber immediately, a Cauty pass-through lock can transfer items within 10 to 15 seconds. The entire center appears extremely well planned, constructed and operated.

The Western Center for Hyperbaric Medicine comes under the direction of John Alexander, M.D. Dr. Alexander is also medical director for the College of Oceanengineering in Wilmington, California, as well as a renowned expert in hyperbaric medicine. He is an avid scuba diver and, therefore, can relate to divers and diving problems. According to Dr. Alexander, the hyperbaric system is "low tech"—it does not depend on sophisticated computerized equipment that might be obsolete within a few years. Instead, it is basic and flexible and should have a long, useful lifetime of operation. The primary purpose of the center is hyperbaric oxygen (HBO) therapy: Patients are placed in a pressurized (air) environment while breathing pure oxygen. The increased supply of oxygen to the tissues promotes

more rapid healing of wounds. This effect was observed as early as the 1930s, when U.S. Navy divers were treated for decompression sickness. Today this therapy is used in treating a host of medical problems, including bone infections, non-healing wounds, crush injuries, problem skin grafts, gas poisonings, etc. Of major concern to sport divers is the fact that HBO therapy and recompression is the only definitive treatment for decompression sickness and gas embolism.

Although the Northridge facility handles mostly routine medical treatments, it can, and does, treat diving accident cases. In fact, the Northridge Hospital is deeply committed to serving the diving community: It performs the initial treatment on about 30 percent of the local diving accident victims; conducts the post treatments in cases from the Catalina chamber; and it funds the Catalina cham-



The mid-size chamber holds six patients.

ber, the operation of which is contracted to the University of Southern California.

In the cases treated to date, Dr. Alexander has noticed an alarming pattern: Most of the divers with problems come to the center for help on Tuesdays. In some bends cases symptoms do not appear until the next day. Then it usually takes 12 to 24 hours for the diver to decide he or she has a problem. If anyone suspects a diving problem, Dr. Alexander advises him/her not to wait. Seek immediate medical attention. "Neurologic damage is a one-shot affair!" It should be treated immediately and not put off until later.

There is absolutely no substitute for diving safety. As always, prevention is the best cure. But knowing and doing are two different things. And, accidents do happen. It's reassuring to know, then, that the hyperbaric chambers at Northridge and Catalina are available and offer the finest treatment for diving accident victims in the world.

For more information on hyperbaric chamber services, or to make a contribution to a facility that, one day, could literally save your life, contact the Western Center for Hyperbaric Medicine, at (818) 993-0263.

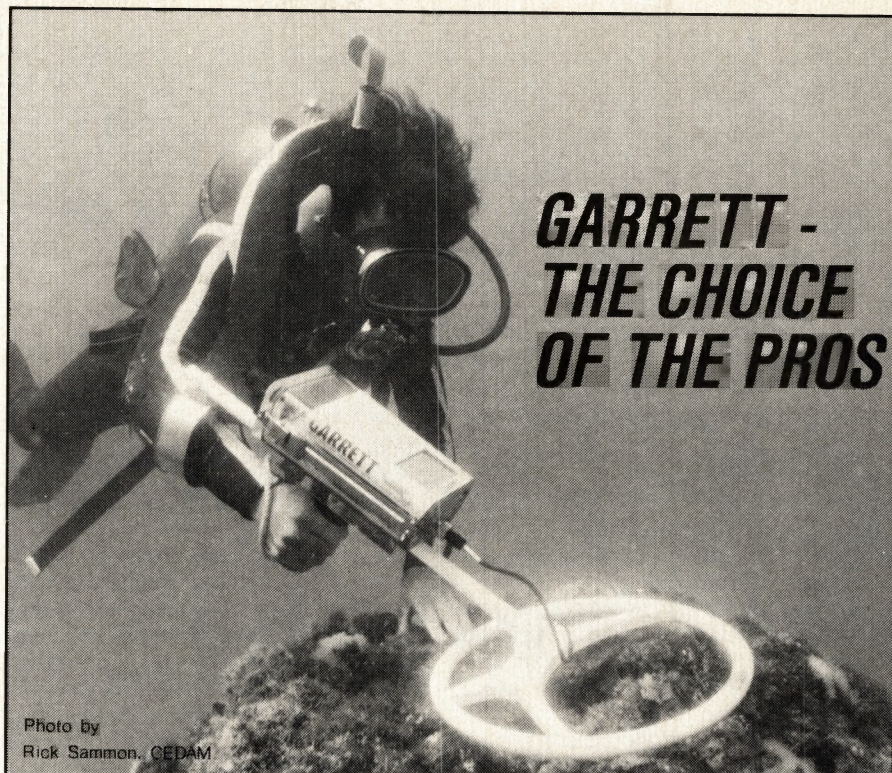


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Technifacts

BY E.R. CROSS



"Car over the side in Morris Dam. People trapped inside." This was the radio message that came in to Los Angeles County Sheriff's deputies Jim Seulke and Mike Kennard as they cruised their beat on Highway 39 in the Emergency Services Detail rescue truck.

Forty air miles away, another Emergency Services Detail response unit picked up another radio report. "An airplane has just crashed into Long Beach Harbor near an oil drilling platform."

These are typical of the calls that keep the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department Emergency Services Detail busy year-round. ESD is a highly specialized unit attached to the Special Enforcement Bureau of Field Operations Division East. It provides full time, regular deputies on a 24 hour basis to function on rescues, searches, emergency medicine and re-

covery operations. This unit is made up of one lieutenant, three sergeants and 17 paramedic qualified deputies under the command of the Special Enforcement Bureau captain.

Lieutenant Michael I. Quinn of the ESD told me, "All our personnel are selected from the complement of regular, full time, Los Angeles County Sheriff's deputies." Mike is 46 years old and is one of the original ESD members. (The unit was formed in July 1966.) After five years he was promoted and moved into other areas of police work. He came back to the unit in July 1985, as the lieutenant in charge. His current aim: "I want to continue with the development of the special skills and to improve our equipment to make the unit more responsive to more kinds of emergencies."

Members of this elite group may be se-

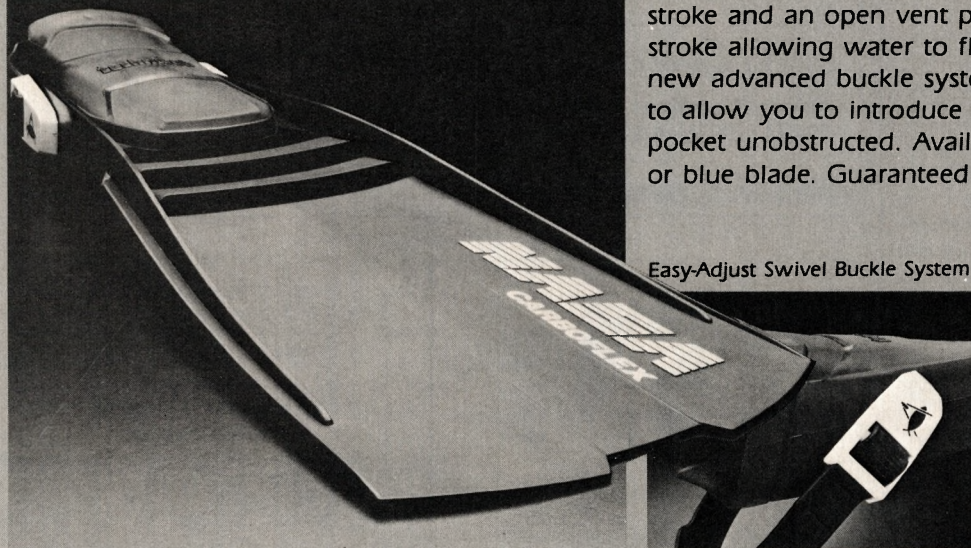
lected for ESD duty only after successful completion of training at the Sheriff's Academy. They must also have served two or more years in a jail custody facility and at least two years of patrol duty.

Deputy Keith Mitchell told me, "It took me five years from the date I applied until I was actually a member of this unit." He is one of four training officers. His expertise includes mountain rescue training. He added, "This long delay is not unusual. We have only about a one man per year turnover."

Deputy Sheriff Bill Angione from La Palma, California, has been a member of the Emergency Services Detail since its founding. He is one of the diving instructors for the unit, a graduate of the Los Angeles County dive training program and a NAUI instructor.

He told me, "Taking the physical for

N.A.S.A.

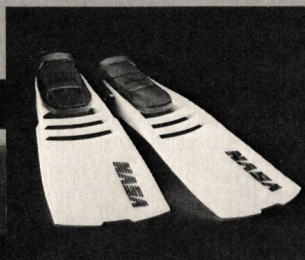


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this duty is an all day exam. It involves running, climbing, weightlifting and swimming." A background check is conducted by one of the sergeants. Then comes the hard part, Bill added. "Each applicant must sit in front of the entire ESD group for a question and answer session. These are the men you are going to be working with. They want to know: What motivated you in wanting to be a member of the



A Hughes 500 Sheriff's helicopter with ESD divers: This method of diver delivery is used for quick access to remote sites.

group? How have you prepared yourself for this rigorous duty? And, what do you feel you can contribute to the operation?"

The consensus of the deputies I talked with is that it takes a new member one year of training and two years with the unit before he can fully carry his own weight in some emergency operations.

When the Unit 240-1 rescue truck with deputies Seulke and Kennard received the call to respond to a car in the water at Morris Dam, they were on a mountain patrol on Highway 39 north of the dam. They arrived at the scene of the accident in about five minutes. Seulke belayed Kennard down the very steep, 300 foot high mountainside to the water's edge. Kennard found the car underwater with only the tail lights showing. Seven persons had been in the car when it made the fatal plunge. Two male adults, one weighing 300 pounds, and a female adult were sitting in the water at the shoreline. A five year old boy was on the shore screaming in agony. A three year old boy with a broken leg was clinging to the nearly submerged car, afraid or unable to swim to shore. The 35 year old female driver of the car was dead at the scene. One nine year old handicapped boy was reported to be still in the car.

Kennard, still in uniform, free dove into the car through an open front window.

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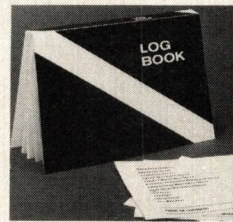
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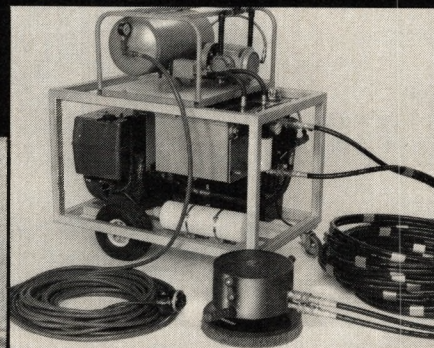
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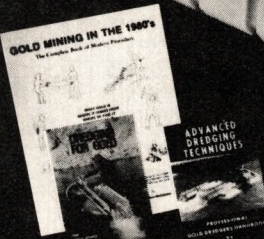
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TECHNIFACTS

Nothing. On a second free dive into the back of the car he was able to check the back seat and floorboards in that area. Nobody was found and he reasoned that the boy must have been thrown free.

The air rescue helicopter, a unit of the Los Angeles County Aero Bureau that works with the ESD in rescue response, with pilot, co-pilot and paramedic deputy sheriffs Jennings and Preston, arrived at the scene while Kennard was searching for the nine year old. The two deputies in the chopper rappelled from the hovering plane to the shore to assist in the rescue. The three year old boy was having difficulty breathing owing to near drowning. He was given CPR by Jennings and both he and Jennings were airlifted to a near-by hospital.

Realizing more help was needed at the shore Seulke had rappelled down the cliff from the roadway and helped pull all of the victims farther up onto the shore and had given them medical treatment. The helicopter returned with a second chopper and the remaining victims and Preston were evacuated to a local hospital. Seulke and Kennard were winched into the helicopter and then landed on the road near their rescue truck where their dive gear was stored. After they donned wetsuits and tanks they again rappelled down the steep bank to the shore, then put on their masks and fins and entered the water in search of the nine year old.

The underwater search around the car was negative. They then swam down a rocky ravine toward the deeper center of the reservoir. At a depth of 50 feet, in zero visibility, the search consisted of sweeping movements with their arms. After a period of 10 minutes, Kennard's hand brushed and then grasped the body of the boy. Both divers surfaced, swam the boy to shore and, after a litter was lowered, raised the body of the boy and that of his mother to the roadway where they were turned over to the coroner.

To be able to respond quickly and with an assurance that the response will be productive, the equipment, as well as the personnel, must be selected with care. For the land based, mountain patrol function, the Emergency Services Detail utilizes a fleet of four-wheel drive, one ton trucks. Each is equipped with a power winch with 900 feet of cable and an eight foot boom. Two of the rescue trucks are on the road each day with two deputies in each. Usually one truck can be found on Highway 2 in the northern part of the Angeles Forest and one on Highway 39 in the southern part of this mountainous recreational area. Patrol trucks are also outfitted with complete scuba gear for two deputies, paramedic equipment, mountain rescue equipment consisting of

ropes, pulleys and mountain climbing gear, plus heavy rescue equipment such as crowbars, rescue saws, capstans and lighting equipment.

For extensive diving operations a team will respond in a van built and equipped for diving with a portable air compressor, room for 30 scuba tanks, full ocean gear for each diver on the operation (usually an eight man team but the entire ESD may respond), underwater lights, search lines, weights, buoys, a seven man inflatable boat with ten horsepower engine, paramedic and oxygen equipment; plus radios for communication and a great deal of safety equipment.

Two deputies of the ESD team that responded to the airplane crash in Long Beach Harbor were at the unit's headquarters at 130 South Fetterly Avenue, in Los Angeles near the junction of four major freeways. The deputies had just returned from a 25 foot dirty water dive in the San Gabriel Reservoir to recover a dumped stolen vehicle and were cleaning their dive gear. The emergency air rescue helicopter, stationed in the San Gabriel Mountains, flew to ESD headquarters, picked up the two additional crewmen and, within 15 minutes, had the divers at the crash site. The helicopter is a large Sikorsky S-58 ship capable of carrying up to 16 people and with ample room for the divers to don their gear.

The normal helicopter crew for rescue response is a pilot and a co-pilot from the Los Angeles County Aero Bureau with an ESD sergeant as crew chief. There will also be two deputy paramedics from ESD.

When the helicopter arrived at the crash site there was a total of seven men on board.

During the flight to the crash site deputies Steve Voors, Keith Mitchell and Paul Hoffman dressed in full dive gear. Jim Schuler, the pilot, hovered the helicopter about 15 feet above the calm sea. The three divers shuffled to the door and, one at a time, did a giant stride exit into the ocean. The Coast Guard, Orange County Sheriff's Department and two Long Beach City Life Guard boats circled the area. The paramedics who jumped from the chopper swam a short distance to a waiting life guard boat and were picked up. The helicopter returned to the mountain base with the remaining crew.

The plane that had crashed was a two seat stunt plane that had been circling the harbor. The pilot was in the front seat. The passenger, a photographer taking pictures of boats in the harbor, was in the back seat. The plane apparently stalled at an altitude of only about 100 feet and pancaked into the water. The pilot, who was only slightly injured, escaped but the plane sank about two minutes after impact and the photographer was still in his seat when it went down. A boater picked up the pilot but did not mark the spot where the plane sank with a buoy. A search for the plane had to be made.

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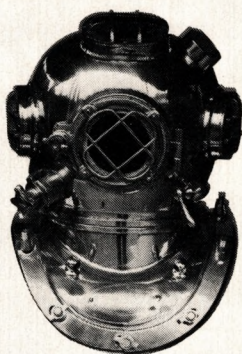
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TECHNIFACTS

The search area was in the open ocean just outside the harbor, perhaps one-half mile from the shore and about the same distance from an oil drilling island. Depth was 35 feet with a silt bottom; devoid of vegetation and mainly free of debris. Two flood control channels empty in this area and visibility was extremely limited, about three feet near the surface and zero on the bottom.

The Long Beach Life Guard dive team in one of their boats, the ESD team in another boat and, later, a third dive team from the Orange County Sheriff's Department, agreed on an underwater search pattern coordinated by the ESD team leader. All divers had worked the pattern that had been agreed on so there was no delay in getting the search started.

Just at dusk the plane was located. The



The ESD dive truck and patrol vehicle

passenger-photographer's body was removed from the plane and brought to the surface. A marker float was tied to the plane, which was raised the next day by Orange County crews.

Los Angeles is rightfully grateful and proud of its Emergency Services Detail, which performs such a wide range of search and rescue missions. In support of these capabilities the unit has one 36 foot boat rigged for diving search and recovery based at Marina del Rey and a 28 foot boat on a trailer based at the unit's headquarters. It, too, is equipped for limited search and rescue as well as diving operations. Both boats are equipped, and are sometimes used, for special enforcement missions such as policing dive boats for proper equipment and procedures during patrols off Catalina Island. Hughes 500 and Bell 47 helicopters from the Sheriff's Aero Bureau supplement the work of the Sikorsky S-58 in search and rescue response. The boats, and the ESD crews, also work to supplement other government agencies and other units within the Sheriff's Department. During Los Angeles Police Special Weapons Team (SWAT) work, one ESD response truck will also respond, primarily to provide paramedic capabilities.

It is obvious that the key to the success of this very special unit is the men themselves. Highly skilled and trained, and highly motivated, the crews make things happen as planned. The initial training of ESD crew members includes a total of 1,558 hours of extremely rigorous conditioning such as 200 hours of mountain search and rescue, 1,000 hours of paramedic training, plus more than 300 additional hours of scuba, firefighting, special weapons, mine rescue and heavy rescue rehearsals. To cope with the demands of their jobs these men must be fit and they must stay fit.

When I asked Lieutenant Michael Quinn what his recommendations would be for a prospective member of this elite group, he told me, "I would strongly recommend such a person show motivation to become an ESD member by becoming a certified diver, learning EMT procedures, survival skills and be an excellent swimmer." Then it will be necessary to try, and keep trying, to gain admission to the unit.

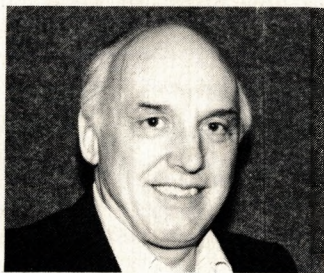
"Becoming a member requires an outlook similar to being a successful member of the team," Quinn said. "You have to be tenacious but not so stubborn as to jeopardize your life or the mission."

Technifacts for next month will be an update on information available to sport divers who want to learn about search and rescue training, underwater investigation and police work. Books, organizations and associations, and training schools that are available for such training will be discussed. Be with us for the emergency facts, plus some answers to questions from Technifacts readers. 

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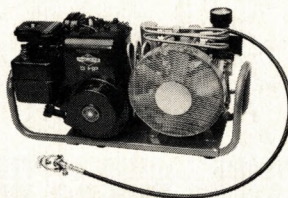
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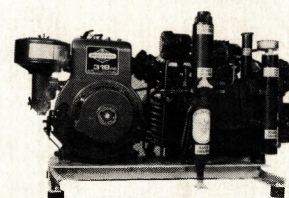
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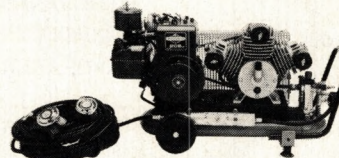


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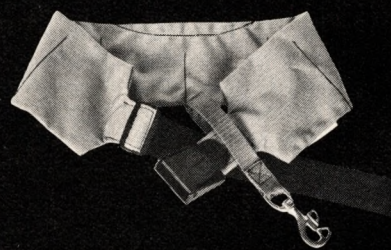
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TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY
BY BONNIE J. CARDONE

The Sea Belt, manufactured by St. Claire Company and distributed by Images D'Avant Garde, is a shot filled weightbelt. As such, it has several advantages conventional lead weightbelts do not. For instance, the Sea Belt is cloth. It will not chafe as lead weights do, thus, there is almost no wear and tear on wetsuits and drysuits. If dropped, the Sea Belt will not damage the deck of a boat and/or any human body parts with which it may come in contact. While it is being worn, it is kind to other divers and to any parts of a boat it may brush against. It can't scratch, dent or bruise anything or anyone. This is one weightbelt you can wear into the galleys of most charter dive boats without encountering the hostility of crew members.

The Sea Belt has a sturdy plastic weightbelt buckle. The two inch wide nylon webbing is resin coated for durability. The body of the Sea Belt is 1,000 denier Cordura nylon. It is double stitched on the inside, which makes the seams very durable. It is divided into five inch wide compartments by stitching that starts at the bottom of the belt and stops just about an inch from the top. Lead shot is poured into the belt through a small opening (less than two inches wide) held closed by a plastic slide. Images D'Avant Garde recommends using size 7½ to 9 gunshot, available from gun shops and some dive stores. A 25 pound sack of gunshot costs about \$11.95.

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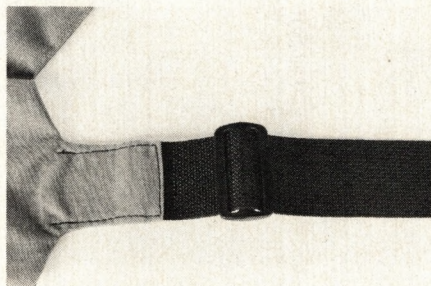


forms a half-moon shape. Shot cannot fill this space. According to the Sea Belt's designers this: relieves stress put on the lower back by the weightbelt; helps keep the belt in place on deeper dives; and provides room for backpacks.

Each Sea Belt comes with a brass coated snap hook for attaching such accessories as goodie bags, lights, etc.

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The Sea Belt comes in royal blue, in three sizes. The small size, for waists



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from 25 to 30 inches, holds up to 22 pounds of shot; the medium fits waists from 29 to 35 inches and holds up to 30 pounds of shot; the large fits waists from 34 to 40 inches and holds up to 38 pounds of shot.

The Sea Belt sells for \$26.95. For more information contact: Images D'Avant Garde, 110 Mariner Green Drive, Corte Madera, CA 94925; (415) 924-9144.

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Nikon Incorporated recently opened a 77,000 square foot National Distribution Center and regional office in Torrance,

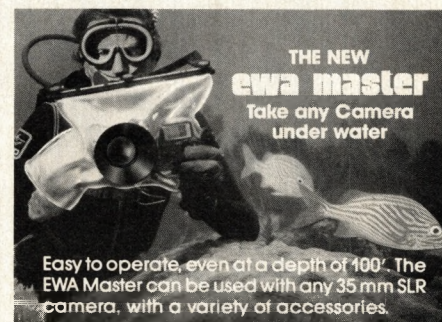


California. The center will serve as the initial distribution point for all Nikon 35mm cameras, lenses, photographic accessories and surveying and ophthalmic instruments shipped by the manufacturer, Nippon Kogaku K.K., Japan, to its subsidiary, Nikon Inc., for sale in this country. The United States is Nikon's largest overseas market.

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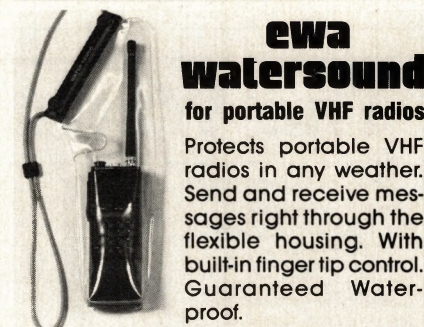


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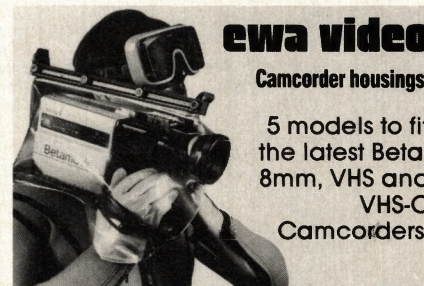


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RIVER GOLD

HIGH ADVENTURE HIGH RISK

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY
BY ROBERT S. RODVIK

Gold—the lure of the yellow metal is as ancient as the history of man. And, who hasn't dreamed of unearthing a new vein or recovering lost nuggets that have escaped previous detection? Gold is, after all, out there for the taking.

The phone rang. My cousin was on the

other end. "Look, I've staked a claim on the best gold bearing river in the country and I've bought a dredging outfit and sluice box. Grab your diving gear and get up here, we'll split 50-50!" he said. Nuggets big as walnuts excited my imagination and two days later, van loaded with

gear, I headed into gold country.

It was a full day's drive from Vancouver, B.C. to the town of Braelorn, B.C., a former gold mining center now almost abandoned. Prospectors on their way to the Cariboo gold rush in the 1860s discovered gold in the gravel of the Bridge River and soon it was rife with the sounds of sluices. In the 1890s, hard rock claims were established along the Hurly River and the town of Braelorn sprang up in the wilderness. More than \$100 million of gold (at \$35 per ounce) was retrieved before the veins ran out and the mines were abandoned. Today, only a few hardy souls remain, ensconced amidst the abandoned shells that housed a tough, earlier breed.

The road to the Bridge River gold country follows the same route used by prospectors over 100 years ago. Today, however, the route is much easier as blacktop makes the passage through the Fraser Canyon merely a scenic marvel. Gone are the paddlewheelers that steamed along the lower Fraser to the outposts of Fort Yale. No longer do the ox teams, horse teams, mule trains and even camels slog the precipitous walls of that rugged canyon on the way to the gold fields.

Three-quarters of the way up the Fraser Canyon, at the town of Lytton, my route leaves the main highway and leads to the town of Lillooet, once a center of

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gold rush activity. The town, that in the 1800s took one week to reach, is now encountered in five hours of smooth driving. At Liloet, the pavement ends and the road to Gold Bridge turns into a narrow, winding, graveled surface that commands total attention. Eighty miles along this dusty, taxing route, the town of Gold Bridge comes into view. Abandoned gold workings lie scattered through the area. From Gold Bridge, the road climbs the mountainside toward Braelorn, the end of the line. As I reached the heights near Braelorn, I could see far below to a narrow river that appeared to rush through sheer canyon walls. "Surely," I hoped, "this can't be the river where my still unseen claim was staked."

Half an hour later I had reached my destination. My cousin raced out to greet me. It was a short embrace, the talk of gold came first.

"Hey Den," I said, "just where is this claim of ours. The only water I saw on the way in is at the bottom of a ravine that would stop a mule in its tracks."

"Well," he replied, "nobody said it would be easy."

Over drinks that evening he outlined the work that lay in front of us. We would spend the first week chain sawing and building a trail down the mountainside just to access our claim. After that it would be a simple matter of constructing a platform for our dredging equipment, then straight into the grabbing of gold. Not liking the prospect of sweating on a mountainside for a week, I suggested we look for an easier method of reaching our gold claim.

The next morning we drove to a spot about one-half mile upstream from our site that was accessible by road.

"Why don't we build our platform here," I suggested, "and float the gear downstream. We can tie a line to the raft and one of us can tail it while the other leads it." We agreed that the plan had merit so we set out to haul the small mountain of equipment down to this entry point. By early afternoon we had lashed together four 45 gallon drums and spanned them with sheets of three-quarter inch plywood to which was tied pump, hoses, compressor and gas powered motor. Donning our wetsuits, we pushed and tugged the apparatus into the rushing water.

Making the first 50 feet was only reasonably difficult. Then we hit the first submerged boulder. My cousin was leading, I was holding the tail line, trying to control the rate of movement. When we hit that first submerged rock, the raft flipped and I felt myself being flung like a cork into the main flow of the river. Miraculously, I held onto the line and, though the water tried to sweep me away, I was able to haul myself back to the floundering raft as Den struggled to keep it from being carried away. Shaken at the close call, we hauled the raft out of the water.

"No way," Den said. "It won't work."

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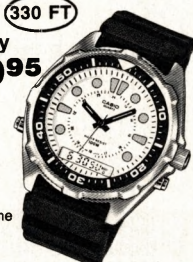
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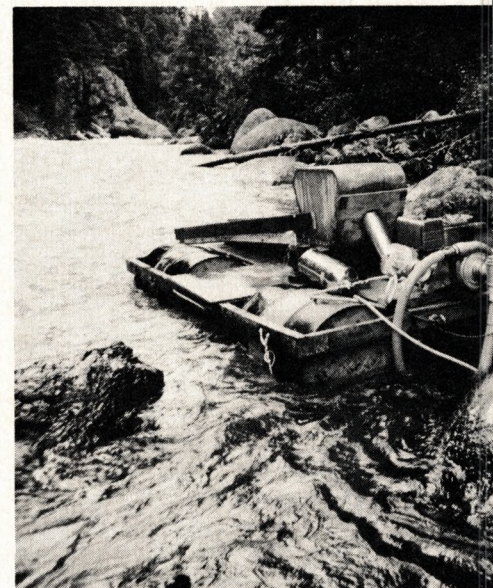
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DIVING FOR GOLD

We'll have to go back to the original plan." Thoughts of where my battered body might have ended made me nod my head in rapid agreement.

We worked hard on the trail and it took us only three days to construct a steep but manageable path to our claim. Recruiting extra hands, it took another day to haul the equipment down to the site. On the fifth day we felled some trees and constructed a platform over the water from which we could work. By early afternoon we were ready to enter the water. The excitement was growing.

Den was to work the first two hour shift underwater while I kept watch above. The compressor provided him with air as he



guided the four inch suction hose along the bottom. Sand and gravel was being washed down our Long Tom sluice, and I wondered how much gold was being trapped in the riffles and matting that lay at its base. I fantasized spending the fortune that would accumulate.

After two hours I signaled my cousin to come up and prepared for my shift. Once in the water, I experienced the difficulty of dredging our present location. The boulder behind which we worked, although huge, was not big enough to halt the raging flow of water that rushed down the mountain canyon. Water was forced through the gaps between this boulder and the rocks on which it lay, creating jets that clouded visibility and pummeled the body. It was disconcerting and even dangerous. If we undermined too much material from below the boulder, it could topple. Anyone below would be doomed.

We ended the day after my shift, then discussed the situation. "Getting pretty hairy down there," I said.

"Yeah," he agreed, "let's look for another spot with better protection."

One hundred yards farther down the canyon we found a massive boulder of many tons. It appeared to offer the safety we needed to keep the force of the river from doing us in before we reached pay-dirt. We washed the contents of the sluice into a container then headed for home, prepared to move the next day.

That night the rains came. In the high mountains the downpour was staggering. It poured for two nights and days before letting up. On the third day, the sun broke through the clouds and shafts of warm light brightened our spirits. Once again it was back to the claim. We slipped and stumbled down the slippery mountain path, then reached our workings. Neither of us was prepared for what we saw.

The river had come up three or more



The gold claim on the Hurly River in British Columbia: an unforgettable experience.

feet, raging even faster through the narrow canyon. Angered perhaps by our intrusion into its realm, the river had taken its revenge. Where we had left our timber platform and equipment only days before, now there was nothing. It had been stolen, grabbed by the powerful flow and washed away. It was a blow that was totally unexpected. Somehow, it raised our determination. We would buy new equipment and start again.

Five days later, \$2,000 poorer, we were back on the river, erecting a new platform at the base of our mega-boulder. This time it went better. The water flow was manageable and we worked steadily below the surface, removing the sand and gravel.

As the surface gravel disappeared, sucked through the hose and into the sluice, the work became more difficult. Stones too big to enter the nozzle were

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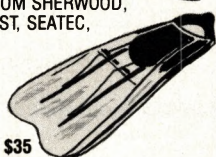
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DIVING FOR GOLD

put into a submerged pail. When filled, the pail was emptied into the torrent that rushed past the boulder's edge. Gradually the rocks grew larger and we would wrestle with small boulders, pushing them into the stream. Rocks that would be impossible to lift on dry land would be tugged below the surface to the main flow and, when shoved into it, would float away—a testament to the river's force. In the back of my mind I knew that there would be no hope if either of us were caught in that awesome flow.

At the end of the second day of working the new hole, we had excavated an area of about five square feet to a depth of five or six feet. We had undermined



two very large rocks that now leaned against each other, creating a granite A-frame under which we continued to work. That night we agreed that the danger of having these boulders collapse on us was too great, that we should intentionally cause them to cave-in—our first project the next day.

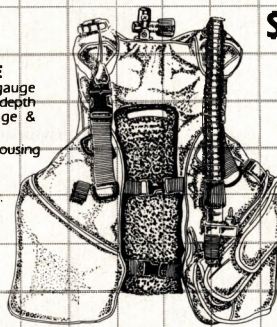
It was my shift in the water and, along with pail and hose, I was using a pick head to loosen the hard packed ground now encountered. My body, from my waist back to my feet, extended like a flag in a mild breeze as I dangled upside down some six feet below the surface. My upper body was wedged through the opening created by our leaning boulders as I worked to loosen the ground below these precipitous elements. Soon I had filled the pail with rock and I laid the pick in the hole and struggled to extract pail and self from this dark tomb. As always, I pulled myself along the bottom to where

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the river picked up force and tipped the pail to spill the rocks into it. This done, still underwater, I returned to my task.

This trip was different. Try as I might, I could not find the hole. Even though the lack of visibility rendered me virtually blind, I had developed a homing instinct. Now, however, I could not locate the hole. Surfacing to ensure my bearings, I determined that I should be immediately over it. I tried again. After a few minutes of poking and feeling along the bottom, I finally touched the cold steel of the pick head. It lay exactly where I had left it, but instead of a body sized entrance to the hole, there was only room enough to slip my arm in. The leaning boulders had collapsed. Only fate had spared my life.

We moved still farther to the shoreline to begin the next hole and over the next week we excavated this to a depth of 10-



The huge, dilapidated ruin of the Pioneer Mine, once a top gold producer in B.C.

12 feet and an area of about five square yards. In the evenings we worked at drying the black, gold-bearing sand and employing mercury to recover the tiny traces of flour gold that had enticed us into continuing this madness. After three weeks of work and the investment of thousands of dollars, we hadn't found more than one-half ounce of gold between us. At least twice, my life had hung by a thread.

The adventure had been an unforgettable experience, a tale I could repeat over and over in the years to come. As I paid my respects and bade farewell to my cousin, I mentally prepared myself to return to the working world. I thought about the lure of gold and the hardships the 49'ers and Klondikers must have faced. One day I knew, I would try it again. After all, gold is out there for the taking!

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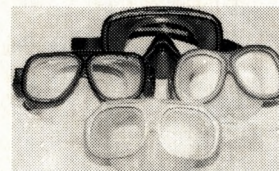
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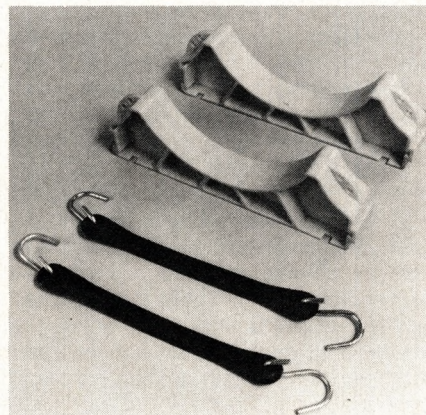
TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY
BY GERI MURPHY



One of the most annoying and irritating sounds to a diver's ear is the clanking of scuba tanks rolling around in the trunk of the car or on the deck of the dive boat. The sound is annoying because down deep you know it can spell trouble. Runaway scuba tanks (especially full ones) can do a tremendous amount of damage.

The sound is also irritating because you know that you will eventually have to stop and reposition the tanks before catastrophe strikes. Getting those rolling cylinders secured in a bumping, swaying vehicle is not an easy job.

A company called Quarry Products of Fitzwilliam, New Hampshire has made the task a lot easier with the introduction of a simple gadget called the Tank Es-

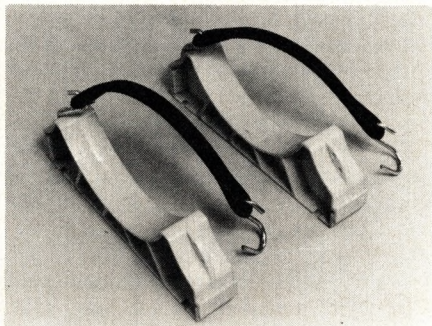


The Tank Escort consists of a pair of plastic cradles and matching rubber straps.

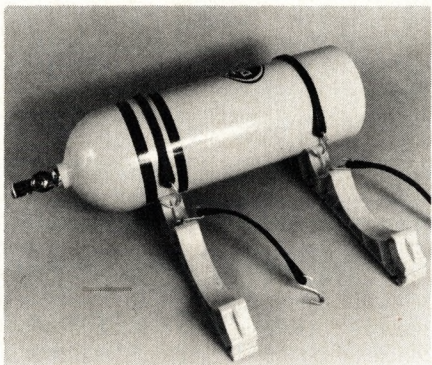
cort. This device consists of a pair of lightweight plastic tank cradles and matching rubber holding straps. The cradles are one and one-half inches wide, heavily ribbed and made of an indestructible polypropylene material. A dual set of strap anchoring holes on each side of the cradle allows the tank escort to fit any size scuba tank.

The neat thing about the Tank Escort is that it can be mounted just about anywhere, positioning a scuba tank either horizontally or vertically. Rubber pads attached to the bottom of the cradles prevent slipping or sliding.

Still another neat design feature is a dovetail tongue and groove notch that allows the cradles to be linked together for two or more tanks. You can build your own multi-tank rack, as large or as small



The cradles have dual sets of strap anchoring holes to fit any size scuba tank.



The cradles can be linked together to accommodate two or more tanks in a row.

as you choose.

The Tank Escort is very light and so compact that it can be packed in your dive gear bag when not in use. You can use it in your car and then take it aboard the dive boat.

The Tank Escort sells for \$19.95 per pair plus shipping. This is an inexpensive insurance premium for prolonging the life of your tank and protecting yourself as well. For more information contact: James Baab, President, Quarry Products, P.O. Box 377, Fitzwilliam, NH 03447; (603) 585-9026.

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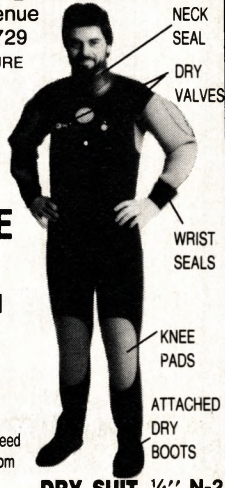
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SPEARFISHING

(Continued from Page 149)

chance of hitting the fish properly. I call anything behind the gills on a fish the butt and if you hit a fish in the butt you haven't hurt it much. The flesh is soft in the flanks and a spear shaft can easily pull out when the fish thrashes around; not to mention that you have poked a big hole in an edible fillet. Know the range and power of your gun.

8. Learn and practice spearfishing etiquette. Safety is a primary issue. Make no mistake about it, an underwater gun is a powerful weapon. Carry and handle your speargun carefully all the time. Hand your gun aboard a boat unloaded (many dive boats throw loaded guns overboard). Unlike a rifle, a speargun can inflict damage at any time. It is a real good idea to get in the habit of putting a rubber protector on the tip or even unscrewing the point to prevent injury.

9. Abide by local game laws. Before entering any dive site with the intention of spearfishing you should be familiar with bag limits, minimum sizes and any species that have seasons or restrictions. There are certain areas where spearguns cannot be used and you can save yourself a hefty fine and confiscation of gear if you simply bone up on the local laws. This particular aspect is one area in which much of the bad publicity on spearfishing occurs. Many divers feel these rules and regulations simply do not apply to them and continue to hunt (poach) in reserved areas. These same divers also break all the size and bag limits as well as shooting protected species. It is this type of attitude by the minority of spearfishermen that will eventually result in licensing and additional restrictions—if not the total banning of spearfishing altogether. My advice is to pursue your game in the proper areas and adhere to the rules in general. The rules are there for a reason. In almost every case they provide the fish a chance to grow and reproduce before becoming fair game. The payoff is more fish for everyone.

Spearfishing is a great sport, not for everyone, but still a great sport. To the underwater hunter there is nothing quite as exhilarating as an exciting dive that ends with a big fish or two in the cooler. Somehow those fish always taste just a little better than any other you've ever had. I believe that if it is done properly spearfishing could upgrade its image even among those who harbor a distaste for it. If the spearfisherman takes the time to learn to identify fish; adheres to the attitude that it is not all right to waste or wound fish for practice; carries his/her gun with care; and uses good common sense when hunting, the image of spearfishing could once again gain the respect of the diving community.

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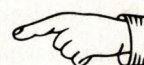


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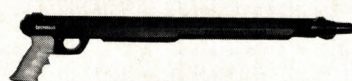


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SKIN DIVER MAY 1986 171

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CORAL LAGOON RESORT AT THE DIVING SITE Middle Keys, MM.53, 12399 Overseas Hwy., Marathon, FL 33050 Waterfront efficiency cottages, dockage, pool, tennis, bikes. PADI dive shop, lessons, 3 boats, groups, spring/fall dive pkgs.	305/289-0121
DIVE KEY WEST 'Carol J', P.O. Box 2842, Key West, FL 33045 Disc. room pkg. & grp. rates. Max. 6 divers. Lobster diving & spearfishing, rentals, air.	305/296-3661
EAGLE'S NEST DIVE CENTER Box 2508, Key Largo, FL 33037 MM. 103.5 53' Sea Eagle Custom alum. ac/heated dive boat. Fastest to Pennekamp reefs. Multi & grp. dive rates. Disc dive shop.	Nat. 800/325-5116 305/451-1063
FLORIDA KEYS DIVE & SKI, INC. P.O. Box 391, Tavernier, FL 33070 A PADI scuba train. fac. Checkouts, 4 day cert. course & all levels of instr. Spearfishing, shelling, watersports.	305/852-4599 6 pass. dive boats.
GOLDEN KEY MOTEL (US) Rt. 1, Box 710, Islamorada, FL 33036 MM. 81 Free dockage & boat ramp, waterfront cottage, rooms with stove & refrigerator, picnic & barbeque area.	305/664-4418
HALL'S DIVING CENTER & RESORTS 1688 Overseas Hwy., Marathon, Keys 33050 Guaranteed "Weather-Proof" reef trips and dive packages. Lessons start every day. All major brands and credit cards.	305/743-5929
HAWK'S CAY RESORT & MARINA MM 61, Marathon, FL 33050 Tennis, pools, jacuzzis, reef trips, PADI. Custom-built dive boats, air/equip. rental, instr., pkg. rates.	US 800/327-7775 FL 800/432-2242 305/743-7000
HOLIDAY ISLE DIVE CENTER P.O. Box 482, Islamorada, FL 33036 MM 84.5 All new "Wreck Diving" All new 22 passenger dive boat	305/664-4145 FL 800/432-2875 US 800/327-7070
KEY LARGO CONDO 3 BR, 1 1/2 Bath, completely furnished. Marina, saunas, tennis, pools, 2 mi. Pennekamp Park. Great diving, fishing, sailing. Special summer rates.	305/433-8073 305/546-2275
KEY LARGO BAYFRONT HOME-Dive, Snorkel-Sail P.O. Box 161414, Miami, FL 33116 3 bedroom/2 bath gorgeous, new, private home with dock. Luxuriously furnished, fantastic rates-less than motel room.	305/255-4556
KEY LARGO LUXURY CONDO Oleinik, 8555 Blue Cut Ln., Cincinnati, OH 45243 Luxuriously decorated, 2 bedroom, dock, pool, sauna, tennis. Minutes from best dive areas.	513/984-0866
KEY WEST CONDO c/o Box 733, Matalwan, NJ 07747 2 BR. ocean front condo, 2 pools, 2 tennis courts, beautiful grounds, sleeps 4, spec. dvr. rates May-Nov. \$495/wk. Reserve early!	201/591-1508
KEY WEST DIVER INC.-CAPT. BILLY DEANS c/o Reef Raiders Dive Shop U.S. #1, Stock Isle, Key West, FL 33040. Dive the Sambos, Ten Fathom Ledge, WWII wrecks, USS Wilkes-Barre. Every dive an adventure.	305/294-0660
LADY CYANA DIVERS P.O. Box 1157, Islamorada, FL 33036 MM 85.9 26', 40' & 60' dive boats. Reefs, galleons, wrecks & The 'Eagle'. Complete pro shop, instruction, packages, photo center.	305/664-8717 800/221-8717
LOOKOUT LODGE RESORT Waterfront efficiencies, beach, boat ramp, docking. Dive packages. PADI OW/AOW. Rental tanks & Weight belts. MM88 between Pennekamp and Islamorada.	301/474-6381
PENNEKAMP PARK CONCESSION Box 13M, MM 102.5, Key Largo, FL 33037 The only dive shop located directly in Pennekamp. Free brochure, send 50¢ for reef chart.	305/451-1621
PLANTATION KEY LARGO LUXURY CONDO c/o 195 N. Airport Rd., Tavernier, Florida 33070 Beautiful 1 BR condo (sleeps 4) on bay. Has everything. Boat ramp & docks. \$295/wk. May-Nov., \$350/wk. Dec.-Apr.	305/852-5748
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ROCK REEF RESORT P.O. Box 73, Key Largo, FL 33037 MM. 98 Divers Paradise, spacious grounds, beach, jacuzzi, comfortable accommodations and comfortable prices.	305/852-2401
SEA CENTER DIVE SHOP P.O. Box 515, Big Pine Key, FL 33043 MM. 29.5 Dive Looe Key, custom boats, dive/lodging packages. PADI facility, full service shop, 24 hr. hydro.	305/872-2319
SEA DWELLERS SPORTS CENTER 99850 Overseas Hwy., Key Largo, FL 33037 Reef trips daily to Pennekamp Park. "Special weekday rates".	305/451-3640 800/451-3640
SEAFARER RESORT MOTEL P.O. Box 185, Key Largo, FL 33037 MM. 97.8 (Gulfside) 'Fantasy Island' setting, real sandy beach & free paddle boat. Clean rooms & efficiencies. Please contact us for group rates.!	305/852-5349

SEA HORSE MOTEL	305/743-6571
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SEA TRAIL MOTEL	305/852-8001
Rt. 5, P.O. Box 91, Key Largo, FL 33037, MM 98.5	
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P.O. Box 2720, Key Largo, FL 33037 MM 102.5	
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STEVE KLEM U/W GUIDE SERVICE	305/451-1831
P.O. Box 1803, Key Largo, FL 33037 MM. 104	
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Rt. 2, Box 617, Summerland, FL 33042	
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THE DIVING SITE, INC.	US 800/634-3935; FL 800/821-9155
12399 Overseas Hwy., Marathon, FL 33050 MM. 53.5	
30 & 16 pass. dive boats. Daily reef trips.	305/289-1021
Charters & group rates, PADI lessons, sales, repairs, dive pkgs.	
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UNDERSEAS INC.	(305) 872-2700
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5208 Mercer Univ. Dr., Macon, GA 31210	
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DIVING WORLD USA	404/634-4354
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AARON'S DIVE SHOP	808/262-2333
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Koko Marina Shop. Ctr., Honolulu, HI 96825	808/395-8882
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Dive charters to Molokini, rentals, 5 day scuba classes, windsurfing.	
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SANDWICH ISLE DIVERS	808/329-9188
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39 N. Allen, Bonne Terre, MO 63628	314/358-5000

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I Learned About Diving From That Bends Hit In Bora Bora

BY STAN WATERMAN

It was a classic hit. There was no time to think about it, but I knew what it was. A severe cramp seized my solar plexus and I doubled over. I was bent.

The place was Bora Bora in French Polynesia, the time, spring of '66. I had been living and filming with my family for nearly a year in the islands. My children and I had our own Boston Whaler. Anchored alongside and diving with me was an old friend and experienced diver. He was accompanied by a native helper. My friend, an excellent still photographer, and I found garden eels on the sand slope beyond the reef. The depth was 130 feet. I was so entranced by the scene and so excited by the subject that I continued filming until I sensed the first restriction in breathing that attends the end of the air supply. We both had single tanks. I started up immediately, knowing there would be enough residual air to support me to the surface and—incredibly—not really concerned that I would have none to spare for a 10 foot deep pause. My friend, not yet out of air, continued his dive, actually somewhat deeper than I had been.

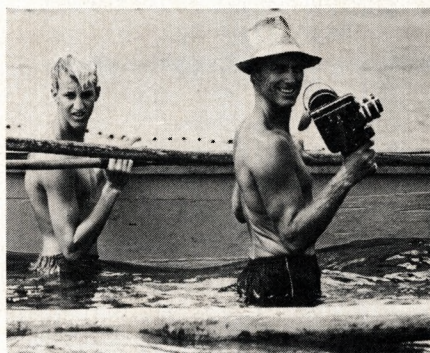
I made the surface, handed up my gear to the kids and pulled myself aboard. The cramp at midriff was immediate and violent. I remember Susy (12) and Gordy (14) watching me with alarm and concern, although they had no real notion of what it meant to have the bends. Neither did I. This was a first. I knew I had to get down to pressure again to relieve the pain and, also, vaguely thought I might decompress myself by hanging off.

As Gordy helped me on with another tank and I prepared to drop over again, my friend surfaced and boarded his own boat. He asked what I was doing. I told him I was bent and was going back down again to decompress. To this he replied, "Nonsense! It is impossible." Then compounding my total naiveté and unpreparedness I dropped down and descended to about 70 feet. The cramps, of course, subsided. I soon began a slow ascent, leveling off at 25 feet and there hung on the line. As I hung there I noticed my friend's anchor coming up and watched his boat pick up speed and de-

part. I later learned that he had gone home for lunch.

As I hung off at 10 feet, beginning to shiver and feel thoroughly miserable, a rain of tins and wrappers showered down about me. Hunger had overwhelmed concern topside on the boat. My children were attacking their lunches! At that point I surfaced and to my profound relief experienced no return of pain or cramps. I thought I had beaten the rap. Of course, I hadn't.

That afternoon I became aware of an increasing heaviness in my legs. By evening motor control had been lost in one leg and partial feeling in the other. Most



critical, I couldn't urinate. At the end of the day the radio on Bora Bora shut down. There was no communication with Tahiti until morning; nor was there any medical facility on the island to provide a catheter for relief of my bladder. With the horse already out of the barn door we read all we could about the bends in the various manuals we had with us.

Guided by a local fisherman who knew the reefs well I was able to run my Whaler out through the pass and then over the 32 miles of open ocean to the neighboring island of Raiatea and a hospital. At 3:00 am a doctor responded to the emergency. By 8:00 am a radio call had brought a small private plane. I was taken at low altitude on the one hour flight to Tahiti and the hospital in Papeete. But, there was no decompression chamber on Tahiti. The only one in the area was on a French warship that was attending the first French atomic blast experiments on the island of Mururua, 900 miles east in the Tuamotu archipelago. Our good friend,

James Stuart, who was then head of the Pan Am office in Papeete, went to bat for me. He used his considerable influence to interest the naval high command in my plight. They arranged to have me flown by military transport in a pressurized cabin to Mururua and called in their warship to rendezvous with me.

There a decompression chamber had been readied for me. I was their first customer. The medical officer in charge of the chamber had never used it. He boned up on the manual. Approximately 50 hours after I had been hit I entered the chamber and was pressured down to 160 feet, the standard treatment then for Table Four bends.

The second day into the decompression I was able to relieve myself into a bucket. I still think of that first real indication that I was on the mend as the most wonderful and comforting "leak" I have ever had.

I was, of course, incredibly lucky. Hard exercise restored full use of my legs. Only a residual loss of feeling on one side from the waist down has lasted over the years. That has been to my advantage. Whenever I require a shot I direct the use of my left buttock.

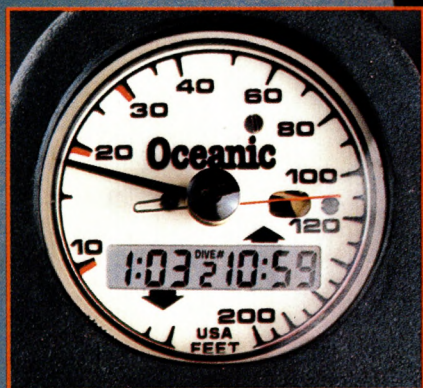
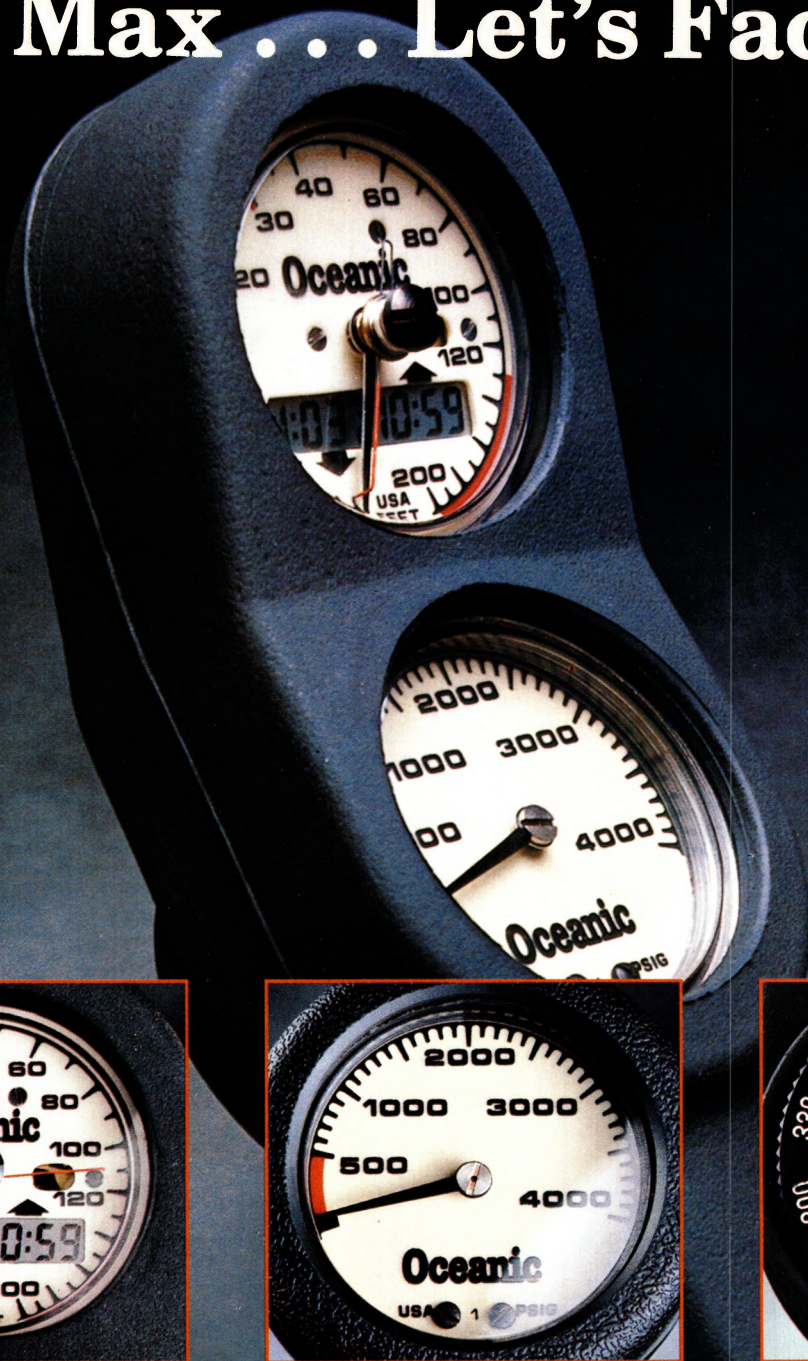
When it happened I had been diving hard for most of a year, almost daily. I was perhaps somewhat undernourished from the limited diet in the islands and certainly underweight and tired. Over a period of months I became dangerously casual about the tables; diving at varied levels on either side of 100 feet during a single dive. The sea was waiting. The natural forces at work were, of course, steady, unrelenting. I was on borrowed time. My physical condition tipped the balance that day. My friend, who went home for lunch, had been down just as long and somewhat deeper. He was also ten years my junior, stockier and rested. He was untouched by the bends and so refused to believe I had really been hit. Such are some of the variables.

I had never been certified, having started scuba diving in the early '50s with an instruction pamphlet that came with my first Aqua-Lung. It advised me I could not get in trouble with a single tank. Any certification course today will disabuse a diver of such foolish notions. 

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